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ENGLISH COSTUME

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A HISTORY OF ENGLISH COSTUME

Written and Illustrated by
IRIS BROOKE, A.R.C.A.

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FOREWORD

HISTORY, to be of genuine value to the student, must live ; and to enable historical figures to change from vague, shapeless phantoms into men and women, one must be able to clothe them in their appropriate garments. Hence the demand for a more general knowledge of historic costume. The subject is an exceedingly interesting one, for not only does it give us a visual representation of our ancestors, but it gives, which is far more intriguing, a definite insight into their manners and habits.

Clothes are, and always have been an outward and visible sign of the inclinations and morals of the people who wear them.

At times of war and unrest the tendency towards a military exterior was carried to excess with patriotic fervour. Political upheavals are marked with the clashings of two styles, times of peace and plenty record themselves with a pastoral simplicity, and a languid exquisiteness. The most brilliant and ostentatious styles mark the periods when wealth was being acquired from across the seas, and the simpler fashions invariably occur after some world-shattering

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crisis, such as the execution of Charles I and the French Revolution.

Comfort has never been a primary consideration for the reasons of fashions.

We do not progress in a sense of practicability, but only in the sense of perpetual change—which is no advancement. I have endeavoured in the following 225 pages to give a brief survey of the changes in costume that have taken place in this country since the Norman Conquest in 1066. Since that memorable date every conceivable flight of fancy in the matter of clothing has been adopted and adapted for fashionable use on these shores.

It does not follow that each and every drawing on the ensuing pages is of English origin, a considerable number, indeed, found their inspiration from other European countries. These inclusions are necessary when we study the hundreds of contemporary records which refer to French, Spanish, Flanderish, Burgundian, Venetian and a dozen other fashions all of which were more fashionable than the simpler attire of that particular age.

It is obviously quite impossible in so slight a volume to include every whim and excess that has from time to time taken the fancy of a few individuals, in fact anything except the most obvious changes in shapes and designs have been purposely omitted.

This little volume, therefore, can be regarded only as a fair and reasonable guide through the jungles

Foreword

of frills, feathers and farthingales that occur with bewildering frequency throughout the history of costume.

L. B.

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CHAPTER I

William the Conqueror to Edward III—1066-1327

AT the time of the Norman Conquest simplicity of cut which amounted almost to a uniform prevailed. The standard lines of a tunic were based on Fig. 1, the only variations being in length and width. The sleeves were, without exception, tight-fitting, and several inches longer than the arm, worn pushed back in a series of concertina-like folds often from wrist to biceps. Sometimes the tunic was split at the sides and almost always finished with a band of embroidery, the richness of design governed only by the financial status of the wearer, the originality by the artistic inclinations of his female relations.

The other more important items of clothing were the 'braies' and 'hose'. The 'braies' were cut on similar lines to a pyjama-trouser, slightly closer at the ankle, and made of linen. They were in general use in England when this history begins. Sometimes they were bound with cross-gartering but, more often, worn with the short hose reaching from ankle to knee. During the last years of the eleventh century the 'braies' were shortened and the 'hose'

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lengthened. The latter then reached well up the thigh and were tied to the belt at the sides, whilst



Fig. 1.—Late Fifteenth Century

the 'braies' were either cut closer, more like tights, or else shortened to the knee, in which case they

William the Conqueror to Edward III—1066-1327

were usually worn outside the tunic, thus achieving the importance of an outer garment.



Fig. 2.—1150

The 'hose' had no foot, unless they happened to be made of leather or felt when they resembled a

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right-fitting boot, occasionally embroidered at the top. More often the shoes, which were made of very flexible leather, were worn over the bare foot.

These shoes were cut high at the instep and fastened either at the side or in front. By the end of the century they had acquired an added few inches at the ankle and were worn rolled or turned down like a cuff.

About the only type of headdress in use during the eleventh century, apart from the hood, was the 'Phrygian Cap' (see Figs. 1 and 3). The latter was usually finished with a close-fitting band round the head and a pointed crown. The point curled forward.

Add to these already mentioned garments an undershirt, or 'sherte', made of linen, another tunic with shorter loose-fitting sleeves, a semi-circular cloak, and you have the complete outfit worn in all weather and for all occasions by the Norman and Anglo-Saxon men.

The tunic could be worn in a number of ways and might vary in length from knee to ankle; the supertunic, when worn, was nearly always several inches shorter than the one beneath. An exception may be seen in Fig. 4. Often its sides were tucked into the belt, but sometimes the material at the hips was just dragged back and pinned at the sides, giving the draped effect so mannered in contemporary drawings.

Practically all garments were cut on the cross at this period, thus giving the necessary fullness with

William the Conqueror to Edward III—1066-1327

a minimum of bulk. This theme might be said to govern the cut of clothes throughout the Middle



Fig. 3—Late Eleventh Century



Fig. 4—1170

Ages. There are, certainly, exceptions, but the straight-cut, bulky garments were not used to any extent until the time of the Tudors.

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The somewhat shapeless draperies worn by women consisted of a linen garment and a robe or gown,



Fig. 5.—Late Eleventh Century

usually made of wool, and cut on the same lines as the tunics of the male. Sometimes these were

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supplemented by a third garment, shorter and fuller, and tied at the waist by a girdle or band of embroidery.

The head was never uncovered, except in the cases of very young girls and slaves, until the twelfth century. Sometimes the covering consisted of a small veil worn over the head and shoulders but, more often, it was similar to a large scarf, draped over the head, with the ends crossed under the chin and thrown back over the shoulders. Spot patterns and bands of embroidery were universally used in decorating the garments of both sexes.

The most spectacular changes in the twelfth century took place in the attire of the women. Previously, for hundreds of years, the female figure had been swathed in copious draperies from head to foot, showing nothing of the figure and little of the head and face. Now, towards the middle of the twelfth century, some time between 1120 and 1140, the hair once more becomes a woman's 'crowning glory', so much so that all sorts of schemes and devices were employed to make it appear more abundant and brilliant than nature had originally intended. Cases of silk and gold and silver sheaths were attached to the ends of the plaits to give them additional length. False hair was mingled with too-scanty locks, and the fashion of binding with ribbons was an easy way to attach an extra few inches to each plait. Two or four plaits were equally prevalent. Sometimes the hair was not

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twisted but divided into two sections and a ribbon laced between. The parting was always in the



Fig. 6.—1160

centre. Ladies who wished to appear more blonde than they actually were suffered agonies from bleaching, spreading their locks in the strongest sunlight

William the Conqueror to Edward III—1066-1327

in an endeavour to attain a lighter shade ; some years later saffron dye was used for the same purpose. Possibly gentlemen preferred blondes even in the twelfth century !

Little coronets, headbands, or ' fillets ' were worn, and sometimes a diminutive veil, but for fifty years or more the hair was not hidden, as it was the most important factor in a fashionable woman's ensemble.

At about the same time dresses assumed a more figure-fitting style, they were often drawn so tight about the body that a series of rucks appear, reaching from breast to hips (Fig. 6). It is more than probable that some form of corset was worn as early as the twelfth century, most certainly tight-lacing was prevalent in the gowns themselves. It seems probable that the waist was emphasized by binding with a wide strip of linen, wound round and round—some of the contemporary effigies certainly give this impression. The earliest boned and elaborately shaped corset is to be found in the contemporary manuscripts of the latter half of the thirteenth century.

Other excesses of the twelfth century were the absurd lengthening of the sleeves. Either they were cut in a gigantic bell shape with the inside lengthened, or else a cuff was added, this being composed of a band several inches in width and several feet in length, so long in fact that, in order to facilitate movement, they were tied in a gigantic knot—sometimes, even the knot dragged on the ground.

Long girdles, knotted and ornamented with jewels

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and tassels, took the place of the hitherto unseen belt. The cloak also, when worn, was pushed back so that it barely covered the shoulders and revealed as far as possible the wearer's dress ; the one brooch



Fig. 7.—Mid-twelfth Century

or pin which had served as a fastening gave place to two buttons or brooches and a cord or ribbon between, stretching across the throat (see Fig. 8).

With their newly gained freedom from all-envelop-

William the Conqueror to Edward III—1066-1327

ing convention, women vied with each other to reveal their physical attractions—competitive fashion had arrived.



Fig. 8.—1180

The waisted, figure-fitting gowns, however, barely lasted in popularity for fifty years ; before the close

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of the twelfth century, women had returned once more to loosely hanging garments, excessively full



Fig. 9.—1240

but belted, and for the most part wore their hair tucked away—not beneath an all-enveloping veil but

William the Conqueror to Edward III—1066-1327

with the plaits rolled up, either over the ears in shells, or doubled across the nape of the neck and held in place by a loosely meshed net, or linen bag, called a 'crespin'. This net was composed of a variety of materials, from the gold mesh, studded richly with jewels, worn by the wealthy, to the plain, loosely woven woollen ones adopted by the poorer classes.

Eleanor, wife of Henry II, started the vogue for the 'barbette', a band of plain linen worn under the chin and fastened on top of the head; this was frequently worn in conjunction with the 'crespin' and 'fillet', or headband, and continued in general use until well into the fourteenth century (see Figs. 9 and 10).

Little dainty veils of transparent material, decorated with spot patterns and embroidered edges, were worn again; these were cut on the half-circle, like the cloaks, with the straight edge across the forehead and the back falling in folds to the shoulders.

Throughout the twelfth century men contented themselves with a mere elaboration of the standard schemes. Further embroideries decorated the tunics and super-tunics, richer material and more elaborate colours were the vogue. Collars were deeper and more complicated in design and appear, in many cases, to be entirely separate from the tunic, and made of some metal ornamented with semi-precious stones; there is a rather curious hinged effect in

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contemporary illustrations which could not have been obtained with the stiffest of embroideries.



Fig. 10.—1260

Gilded leather was, in all probability, also employed for collars and cuffs.

William the Conqueror to Edward III—1066-1327

There were a few variations in the matter of headdress; versions and parodies of the original



Fig. 11.—1250

Phrygian cap were manifold, and, with the exception of the peasant hat, shady and utilitarian, they

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were practically all brimless and finished with a point on the top.



Fig. 12.—1180

The tendency towards points was general near the close of the century, especially in the case of hats,

William the Conqueror to Edward III—1066-1327

hoods and shoes, as these might be elongated to suit the inclinations of the individual.



Fig. 13.—Late Twelfth Century

Apart from the already-mentioned extravagances of the wealthy there was little change, except in the

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manner of hairdressing. During the opening years of this book the hair had been worn either short or cut to the lobe of the ear but, during the twelfth century, the man of fashion wore his hair long and curled in a variety of ways (see Figs. 7 and 13). Sometimes a fringe was cut and rows of curls stuck down to the forehead, all turned inwards towards the centre parting. Often the hair was curled in a series of elongated rolls over the ears and the back hair left untouched; corkscrew ringlets were popular.

Beards also demanded a maximum of attention; these were combed and curled, clipped and parted, and received a grooming which almost rivalled that of the Assyrians in a bygone age.

The thirteenth century shows several innovations and additions to the garments of the preceding century, most of which apply to both sexes.

The origin of the 'surcote', or sleeveless tunic, can be traced to the 'tabards' and super-tunics worn by the first Crusaders over the 'hauberk'. Obviously some garment was necessary to protect the mail; the sun would have rendered the metal unbearable were it not covered in some way. Sometimes the covering consisted of a tunic with full sleeves, but a sleeveless garment gave more freedom and the simple strip of material, with just a hole for the head and falling to the knees, was the obvious solution to the problem. The civil adaptation of the 'surcote' gave much the same effect, excepting

William the Conqueror to Edward III—1066-1327

that it was usually joined at the sides from waist to hem. Possibly it became so popular because it had a smaller surface to decorate and because the



Fig. 14.—Mid-thirteenth Century

sleeves and skirts of the tunic underneath made a pleasant contrast (Fig. 14).



Fig. 15.—1260

Another fashion which found its inspiration in the 'surcote' was that shown in Fig. 16 B and C; a sleeved gown, split from waist to armpit. The

William the Conqueror to Edward III—1066-1327

sleeves could be worn or, if for some reason they were inconvenient, the arms could be slipped through the apertures, leaving the sleeves hanging down the back.

An outer garment which took the place of a cloak



Fig. 16.—1260

is illustrated in Fig. 15. The sleeve was cut like the sleeve of a Japanese kimono, with the split for the hand at the side. Hoods were usually attached and, sometimes, a deep fur collar. These were invariably lined, as were the cloaks, with fur or some contrasting material.



Fig. 17.—Late Thirteenth Century

Yet another important change was the very loose arm-hole. Where the sleeve joined the garment the width was so great that the under-arm seam often

William the Conqueror to Edward III—1066-1327

commenced at the waist and tapered, in a V shape, to the wrist. This new-shaped sleeve was often worn in conjunction with the 'surcote', the width filling the splits at the sides and giving the effect of a tunic with sleeves of a different colour (see Fig. 14).

As will be seen from one or two examples in this chapter, the 'braies' were worn full and tucked into the hose, thus resembling shortened plus-fours.

The fad for long hair came to an end at the end of the twelfth century. Apart from the fact that it now received a little more grooming and general attention, the hair was again worn as it had been during the latter part of the eleventh century.

Little bonnet-shaped caps called 'coifs' were almost as popular with the men as the 'barbette' was with the women. These came into being at the beginning of the century and, possibly, also found their inspiration in the dress of the Crusaders who always wore a 'coif' beneath a chain-mail head-covering. The fashion spread and all manner of hats were worn over the 'coif'; in particular, it was a style adopted by sportsmen and soldiers as it was extremely useful in keeping the face free from straying locks of hair.

One or two little alterations will be noticed in the cut of the tunics. Frequently they were split in front and at the sides from hem to waist, and the neck-openings, which for so long had been in front,

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may occasionally be seen at the side (Fig. 16 A). Panels of decoration were worn down the front of



Fig. 18.—1300

the tunic, from neck to waist—or, more often, from neck to hem. The fashion for hitching the sides

William the Conqueror to Edward III—1066-1327

of the tunic and forming U-shaped folds across the front entirely disappeared about the middle of the



Fig. 19.—1300

century. By the end of the century the tunic had assumed a figure-fitting tightness to the hips.

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About 1260 another vogue for long plaits seems to have started but received little following as the



Fig. 20.—1320

'crespin', 'barbette' and 'fillet' continued in popularity. An interesting development of the

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'fillet' took place in the form of a curious little pillbox-shaped hat. This was flat-topped and about four inches deep. The edge was frilled, pleated or cut in a series of waves. Crowns were worn over these by the ladies of rank.

It is very difficult to see the difference between the deep 'fillet' and the cap in contemporary illustrations; there are, however, several effigies still in existence which show examples of both.

During the 70's, simplicity was in general favour. The girdle or belt worn by women disappeared and the gown hung in deep folds from shoulder to hem. Sleeves once more became tight-fitting and the hanging cuff, which had been creeping back into fashion, vanished again.

Materials were rich and costly, but the craze for bands of trimming was definitely on the wane.

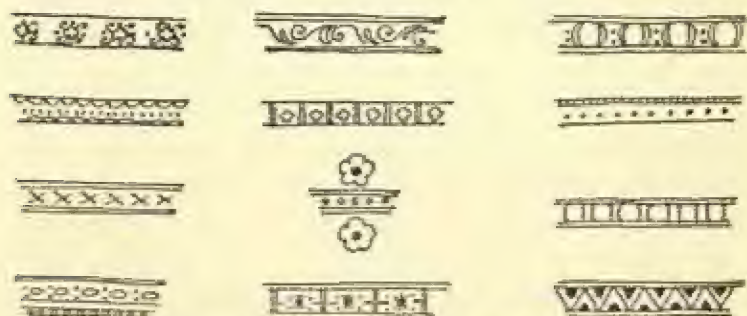


Fig. 21.—Late Eleventh Century and Early Twelfth

CHAPTER II

Edward III to Henry VII—1327-1485

IT is during the reign of Edward III (1327-77), that great steps in the advancement of clothes as a decorative medium and an expression of personal taste are found. The perfect fusion of conquerors and conquered had just reached its ultimate end in establishing an English people, speaking English, and with individual tastes which sought expression in outward visible signs.

It is necessary, at this point in the progression of fashion, to give some sort of directory of various names applied to the clothes of the period. So far we have been somewhat limited in this respect.

Firstly, let us take the apparel of the fourteenth-century man : a shirt which varied little, if at all, from its predecessor of the tenth century—definitely an under-garment and rarely to be seen. Over this a 'gipon', which was later alluded to as a doubler. Then came a tunic reaching to the knees, the skirts flared, the sleeves and body closely fitting, and over this a 'cote hardie', 'surcote' or 'surcoat'—cut on somewhat looser lines than the 'gipon' and with loosely hanging sleeves. The 'hose' were like a

Edward III to Henry VII—1327-1485

woman's stocking of the present day and were tied to the waist with strings.



Fig. 22.—1336

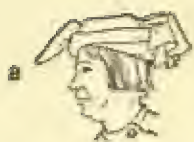
The hood was generally worn and was the typical feature of male costume throughout the fourteenth

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and fifteenth centuries. Its evolution can be traced step by step in the following pages ; at the beginning of the fourteenth century it was merely a cowl with a 'gorget' over the shoulders—a protection for the ears, neck, and shoulders. Gradually the point became elongated and, later, a pipe of the same material, several feet in length, was attached to the point and called a 'liripipe'. The edge of the 'gorget', following the mode of the time, was 'dagged'—cut in a series of points—thus giving the effect of an ornamental collar. (See Fig. 23 B and C.)

About 1325 the aperture, which had been originally left for the face, was placed over the head. The ornamental edge of the 'gorget', therefore, hung in folds down one side of the face or stood up like a cockscomb and the 'liripipe' hung down the other side—the latter was then wound round the head, giving a turban-like effect. This fashion lasted for over a hundred years and could be worn as a hood or as a hat. Later the same theme, though lacking its original uses, was enlarged upon as the design for a wide-brimmed hat. (See Fig. 38 B.)

Obviously the most drastic change in men's clothes was that from a somewhat loosely shaped garment into a figure-fitting 'gipon', almost skin-tight in its most exaggerated interpretations. These 'gipons' were cut on the scantiest of lines, sometimes barely covering the buttocks in their most modish representations. The hose had naturally become very



1330

A



1345

C



1375

Fig 23

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elongated to correspond with the abbreviation of the 'gipon', but were still separate ; it was not until



Fig. 24.—1340

about 1380 that they reached the waist and assumed the proportions of rights.

Edward III to Henry VII—1327-1485

Several passing fashions occurred in masculine attire during the early years of the fourteenth century. The 'garnache' or loose-fitting tunic with a sort of cape sleeve, appeared in the closing years of the thirteenth century and lasted in undiminishing popularity for some fifty years (Fig. 24). This was usually worn over a fairly long under-tunic, and had a curiously shaped collar-opening finished with two oval flaps.

The fashion for jagged and dagged edges to all garments was essentially a man's prerogative; these edges were cut in a great variety of patterns, from a plain scallop to a very decorative leaf pattern. The entire edge of a cloak or 'gorget', or the loosely hanging sleeves of the 'surcote', which became fashionable about 1325, were nearly always decorated in this manner.

For women too a shift or linen shirt, corresponding to those worn by the men, was the only under-garment. Next came the 'kirtle' or under-gown, tight-fitting to the hips, the back and later the front laced to make it fit closer and the sleeves buttoned from wrist to elbow. The outer gown was referred to alike as a 'cotehardie' or surcoat and was, more often than not, sleeveless.

One of the most typical styles, introduced in the late 40's to last in popularity for over a century, was the cut-away 'cotehardie' (Fig. 25). This garment was the elaborate outcome of the sleeveless gown worn during the previous century. The aper-

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tures which had once served as arm-holes were cut away to such an extreme that they showed the belt



Fig. 25.—1350

worn on the hips of the 'kirtle' beneath. The shoulders were narrowed so that only a strap of two or three inches remained to hold the garment in

Edward III to Henry VII—1327-1485

position. Its vicissitudes can be traced through the succeeding pages.



Fig. 26.—1350

An important innovation of the time was the extreme use of buttons as an ornamentation as well as for utilitarian purposes. In earlier years the

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brooch and pin had been almost the only means of fastening. From the fourteenth century onwards, buttons became of primary importance.

The lowered waist-line was a general feature of the fourteenth century. Where, previously, the belt or girdle had been worn at the normal waist, it had now descended to the hips and, about the middle of the century must have been extremely difficult to wear, as it appears to have descended still lower and was composed of weighty metals and precious stones—these were worn by both women and men.

Another style which appeared at this time was the fashion for 'tippetts'—bands of material, usually white, some three or four inches wide and worn above the elbow, falling in a long streamer almost to the hem of the gown (Fig. 27). On the same figure the use of 'fitchets' will be noticed. These pocket-like slits in garments, worn by both men and women, became a feature of the 'surcote' during the closing years of the thirteenth century, their use being as a means of access to the belt worn on the 'kirtle' or 'gipon', where purse and knife were kept.

Some years before the middle of the fourteenth century the sleeves were extended over the hand, in some cases to the knuckle and cut closely fitting but not rucked at the wrist.

Many were the changes wrought in the matter of women's headdress throughout this century. During the opening years the wimple or chin veil was exten-

Edward III to Henry VII—1327-1485

sively worn, both by old and young women ; it was a fashion that took many years to become totally



1330



1380

Fig. 27.

obliterated, and we may still see the elderly and restrained wearing it well into the sixteenth century.

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Fig. 27 A shows three different arrangements of the wimple in its earlier stages.

A very interesting type of head veil became fashionable about 1360 ; this was one with layers of ruched or goffered frills sewn along the front straight edge of a half-circle of material, the weight of the frills holding it closely round the face and forming an inverted U (Fig. 29 A), and coming down to the jaw-bone on either side of the face ; sometimes the veil was also ornamented with a similar row of frills



Fig. 28.—1380

at the back. This shape became even more popular towards the close of the century ; another headdress was evolved from it, giving much the same effect, though not to be confused with its original inspiration, which was only an ornamented veil. Fig. 35 shows the padded cushion-like affair which was held in place by its attachment to the circlet. Usually this was covered with the all-popular gold mesh and jewels, and was called the reticulated coiffure, as the hair was worn inside it.

Another very popular method of adorning the head was the circlet, with an open-work casing at





Edward III to Henry VII—1327-1485

each side of the face (Fig. 27) ; the hair was plaited and folded into these cases which were in front of



Fig. 29 A—1370



Fig. 29 B

the ears ; this fashion was distinctive of the middle of the fourteenth century.

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In the year 1383 Anne of Bohemia married Richard II, and introduced into England some of the most extraordinary headdresses in the history of



Fig. 30

the world. Before this date practically all head-dresses had been inspired either as a covering for the hair, or as a means of drawing attention to its beauty ; now the one consuming idea was to cover



1446

1470



1420



1420

Fig. 31

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all traces of the fact that a woman had any hair on her head at all! This scheme was carried to such an excess that even the hairs on the neck had to be removed, and it became quite a common sight to see a lady of quality plucking out the hairs on her neck as she listened to her minstrels, or watched a tournament.

So numerous were the varieties of headdresses introduced in the closing years of the fourteenth



Fig. 32.—1439

century and throughout the fifteenth, that there is not the space to deal with each of these with any degree of thoroughness. There are, however, sufficient drawings in the ensuing pages to illustrate the most popular forms of headgear. It was an age of fantastic decoration, and the woman who devised a new method of adorning her head, be it with horns, pads or boxes, or of course a new variety of hennin of sugar-loaf, was immediately fashionable; apparently the more absurd and inhuman the encumbrance, the more in vogue the wearer became.

Nor indeed were the revolutionary ideas exclusive to headdress. A passion for over-decoration and

Edward III to Henry VII—1327-1485

general exaggeration of already known shapes was accentuated by the introduction of an entirely new



Fig. 33.—1420

silhouette; this was known as the Houpelande. The masculine and feminine interpretation of the

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same garment can be seen in Figs. 33 A and B. This houpelande was a voluminous gown cut from



Fig. 34.--1400

a complete circle of material, with a hole in the middle for the head, and a slice at the sides at an angle of about thirty degrees sewn up to make the



Fig. 35.—1400

long, pointed, hanging sleeve. The general effect thus being of a gown close at the throat, fitting the top of the shoulders, and thence falling in folds of

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ever-increasing fullness to the hem. When worn by men the houppelande fitted the throat well up to the ears, and was more often than not decorated with a band of fur ; it was practically always belted, but no rules governed the length it might be worn, from mid-thigh to the ground. With the use of the houppelande came the high waist for women. A wide belt, four to six inches in width, was worn close under the breasts ; this fashion outlived the popularity of its instigator, the houppelande, and we find it still fashionable well into the sixteenth century. The introduction of a high waist-line, however, did not detract from the general popularity of the sideless gown, nor the closely fitting kirtle from shoulder to hip ; these two fashions found their adherents until about 1480, when they were entirely supplanted by the universal high or normal waist-line.

Other features of the closing years of the fourteenth century were the added emphasis of the width of shoulder, a numerous variety in sleeves, a passion for tall and peculiar hats, and the ridiculous elongation of the toes of shoes ; all these styles are easily traceable to their origin in the court of the young Richard II and Anne of Bohemia.

There are several things that stand out with emphasis in the fifteenth century, the chief of which appears to be in the wealth of colour and design. The use of patterns as a means of ornamentation succeeded the popularity of barbaric jewellery.

After about 1420 practically every garment was

Edward III to Henry VII—1327-1485

covered with a large design, sometimes so large that only one repeat would appear on the front or back



Fig. 36.—1325

of the very much abbreviated jacket of a fashionable gentleman.

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Excess and exaggeration governed every new style, and hardly a single fashion was started that was not



Fig. 37.—1408

carried to a ridiculous extreme within a few years of its introduction.

Perhaps one of the silliest and unpractical crazes

Edward III to Henry VII—1327-1485

was that for long-toed shoes, which reached the height of absurdity in about 1420 when the toes



Fig. 38.—1440

became so long that they had to be attached to the knees with chains, so that they didn't trip the wearer,

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or some one else who might be passing ; indeed a law was enforced by the nobility prohibiting the use of shoes with points longer than two feet, for all those who did not receive an income of over 40 pounds per annum ! Thus assuring one excess to be enjoyed by the wealthy alone.

Between the years 1420-50 every shape and size in hats had been tried, large and small brimmed, with immense towering crowns, globular crowns, cottage-loaf crowns, small rolled brims, brims turned up and brims turned down, and eventually the feathered high-crowned, and small or no-brimmed hat which achieved a general popularity for about thirty years (Fig. 38 A). And throughout this time the old hood, with its cockscomb and liripipe (the latter now known by the name of tippet) held a sort of dignified aloofness. In Fig. 39 this headdress, now often called a bonnet, has the shape, which was originally formed by the liripipe, made into a solid roll ; this roll was termed a roundlet.

In the same figure a newer type of jacket is to be seen ; this differed from those worn earlier in the century, in that the neck-line was cut in a V shape front and back, and showed the high collar of the doublet underneath, whilst those worn from the end of the fourteenth century to about 1430 had the high collar actually on the outer gown or jacket as they were now called.

From about 1420 to 1480 the emphasis in shape

Edward III to Henry VII—1327-1485

was on the shoulders and hips ; the shoulders were all enlarged by the addition of full padded sleeves,



Fig. 39.—1440

or a single roll at the top of the sleeve ; in the former case the sleeve was made very long and fairly

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loose fitting, a slit sometimes at the elbow, where the arm could come out if so desired ; if the entire



Fig. 40--1460

length of sleeve was worn on the arm the fullness was folded between the elbow and wrist, and was

Edward III to Henry VII—1327-1485

so long as barely to show the finger-tips (Fig. 39).
Fig. 40 shows the sleeve with the slit top.



Fig. 41.—1465

The emphasis on the hips was obtained by a very full skirt, and an exceedingly tight belt, and later,

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by judicious gathering at the front and back as seen on Fig. 41.



Fig. 42.—1470

Some years before the 80's the idea of points became prevalent. This method of joining a variety of assorted parts of a dress, by making holes and



Edward III to Henry VII—1327-1485

tying them together with ties somewhat resembling a boot-lace, carried right through the time of the



Fig. 43.—1482

Tudors and well into the Stuarts. In this example (Fig. 41 B) the sleeve of the gipon is slit and tied

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showing the shirt underneath, and the sleeve of the doublet is quite separate from the doublet itself, but tied in a corresponding manner by points at the shoulders. During the 80's the slowly receding doublet became so ridiculously abbreviated that it was barely long enough to belt at the waist, and after this date it is quite usual to see the doublet hanging from the shoulders without any belt (Figs. 42 and 43).

CHAPTER III

Early Tudors

Henry VII to Elizabeth—1485-1558

THE early Tudor styles were as intriguing as they were fantastic. Henry VII's reign witnessed the somewhat drastic change from extreme brevity to voluminous excess in men's clothes, and the first appearance of a full-gathered skirt for women, in contrast to the flared and circular ones of the Middle Ages.

Although neither of these styles was definitely established as the general rule until the reign of Henry VIII, 1509, we can find a very distinct tendency towards the voluminous even in the transitional stages.



Fig. 44.—1490

Throughout the reign of Henry VII women's hair was frequently worn loose, or in a net or snood reminiscent of the crespin of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries; this style in itself was something in the nature of a revolution, after the hairless



Fig. 45.—1490

Henry VII to Elizabeth—1485-1558

and gigantic head-coverings which had been in favour for the preceding 100 years. The hennin or sugar-loaf headdress was still to be seen in diminishing quantities until about 1500, but as will be seen in Fig. 46, even this had changed its whole nature and

A



B



Fig. 46.—1490

effect, in its angle and the addition of long lappets hanging down on either side of the face; these had been added some time during the 70's, and were perhaps the original inspiration of a fashion for so framing the face, which is one of the definite char-

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acteristics of the early Tudor styles, especially in England.

Contemporary portraits of Elizabeth of York show her wearing the Gable or Kennel headdress, a sombre note in head-covering in comparison with the ex-

A



B



Fig. 47.—1515

cesses of the preceding century. This headdress in its original arrangement (Fig. 49) was worn for some fifteen years, and later rearranged, as will be seen in Fig. 47, with the flaps folded neatly back over the gable, and the veil, which was divided at the back,

Henry VII to Elizabeth—1485-1558

arranged to suit the wearer. This veil, as can be seen in Fig. 46 B, was nearly always split at either side, forming three sections, one at the back and one over either shoulder.

When the Gable headdress was first worn, the hair was just parted in the middle and allowed to fall free at the back, beneath the veil; later, about 1510, when the rearrangement took place, the hair was either bound with ribbons and folded across the forehead, or else covered by cases of striped silk. This, crossed over a striped base, formed an essential part of the general effect and filled the gap from the head to the protruding edge of the jewelled or embroidered coif, which made the structural shape of the headdress. About 1500-5 a close-fitting coif, surmounted by a circlet of jewels (Fig. 48 A) and worn with the same short veil behind, became popular. This style was enlarged upon and exaggerated until it assumed the proportions of a bonnet (Fig. 54) and became so heavy with jewelled decorations that it had to be tied beneath the chin to keep it from slipping off the head.

To follow the German style in clothes and hats of all kinds was distinctly the fashion from about 1500 to 1535, and that is why at this particular period we see two definite styles in the headdresses and clothes of women.

On the one hand, the adherents to the English fashion wore the gables and coifs, with a gown with full trailing skirts, huge bell-shaped sleeves, square

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necks, and a solid bolster-like shaping from waist to armpits, which was brought about by the use of leather corsets (Fig. 49).



Fig. 48.—1520

And on the other hand those who followed the prevailing German styles wore the hair loosely in a

Henry VII to Elizabeth—1485-1558

net, surmounted by a masculine hat well adorned with feathers, and worn at a jaunty angle. An



Fig. 49.—1500

exceedingly high waist, and a very low-cut neckline, usually oval in shape, leaving the bodice only

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a few inches in depth, full slashed sleeves, cut and puffed and tied in a bewildering number of ways, and an even fuller and more voluminous skirt



Fig. 50.—1520

gathered to the waist in great thick folds almost resembling pleats in their extreme fullness (Fig. 50).

Men's attire, at this particular period, passes from

A



1493

B



1510

C



D



Fig. 51

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the simplicity of three garments to the eccentricities of a dozen. So complicated and numerous were the additions of fronts, shirts, sleeves, &c., after about 1500, that in many cases it is impossible to discover just what this or that part had in connexion with the rest of the ensemble.

Fig. 51 A and B show the change of fifteenth- to sixteenth-century silhouettes with the maximum of simplicity. If we take the standard garments as a doublet and jerkin—the doublet worn next the shirt, the jerkin outside—we have some foundation to work upon. The doublet, as worn during the opening years of the century, was little more than an abbreviated waistcoat, made with or without sleeves; these could be attached to any garment by the already popular method of tying with points (Fig. 51 B and C). Sometimes the jerkin was exactly similar in cut—with the addition of sleeves—or again it might be full-skirted as in Fig. 51 A. Tights, called stocks, were worn by all, and were tied to the doublet.

If the doublet were only short, reaching to the waist, a separate skirt would be added. The shirt was perhaps the only garment that was not cut up into several different pieces, and from about 1485 until 1520 remained practically unchanged. It was very full, the fullness gathered into a low neck-line sometimes almost off the shoulders, and the sleeves profusely gathered at the shoulder and again at the wrist and finished with a small frill. After 1520 the neck-line was drawn up round the throat and

Henry VII to Elizabeth—1485-1558

again finished with a frill—the germ of the ruffle to come. This fashion, however, was not generalized

A



B



Fig. 52—1530

until about 1540, the low neck-line still finding favour.

Worn over the doublet and jerkin was an exceedingly full, knee-length gown; this gown varied little

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in shape from about 1500 until about 1560. It was practically always lined with fur, or some such con-



Fig. 53—1495

trasting material. A deep fur collar, turned back at the neck, added to the height and width of already over-accentuated shoulders. Usually the gown had

Henry VII to Elizabeth—1485-1588

short sleeves, or a long sleeve cut open on the outside, and left hanging (Fig. 55 B). But quite often it had no sleeves at all. The back of the gown was gathered on to a yoke; this may be seen in Fig. 53, but the yoke was considerably higher than this example in the ensuing years.

The 30's and 40's saw these gowns—and indeed the jerkin and other masculine garments—made with so much fullness that not another fold could be pushed into the seams, and in many cases the bulk was so great that the folds were just caught in loops on to the seam and actually stood away from the garment in a series of corrugated pleats. This excessive fullness, however, was more a characteristic of the German garments than those worn in England.

Every garment was slashed and bombasted and generally over-ornamented, the chief means of adornment being bands of velvet called 'guards', and the profuse addition of jewels and embroideries to the already almost priceless materials. Henry VIII's reign was distinguished for its excesses, and the richness of the gowns is hardly believable unless studied in the contemporary portraits of the period. Silks and velvets, cloth of gold and silver, and brilliantly dyed fabrics lost much of their splendour with the profusion of exotic ornamentation that adorned them. The whole idea of slashing was obviously started so that he who possessed a fine silk shirt and a gorgeous doublet might show his neighbours the magnificence of his under-garments—with dignity.

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It was essentially a period when man was the cock-bird in his fine feathers. For the general tendency in women's attire was somewhat sombre in contrast—the depth of colour and the extreme use of black—as a background for jewellery of startling magnificence, in conjunction with a gown reaching from shoulder to toes, could not be half so blatantly effective as a sort of hodge-podge of half a dozen assorted pieces of clothing of different shades and materials, all equally adorned with jewels and ornaments.

About 1530 the skirts of the ladies' gowns were split up the front (Figs. 54 and 55), revealing a beautifully embroidered kirtle or petticoat beneath. Following the general tendency of the time this often was another sham and consisted of merely a panel of material. However, the general effect was one of magnificence. With the split skirt an added fullness became apparent; whether this was produced in the Dutch fashion by a multitude of petticoats, or if padding was worn at the hips, it is difficult to say at this early date. The Spanish vertingale or farthingale was not introduced into the country until the reign of Mary, 1553. It is more than probable that a corded petticoat was worn similar to those worn during the last century, which certainly give an effect of a crinoline without the necessity of the complicated addition of wires and whalebone.

Corsets of steel, leather and wood were worn from about 1540 until the early years of the seventeenth

Henry VII to Elizabeth—1485-1558

century, and a peculiar solidity appears in all contemporary paintings, giving an air of unnaturalness to the ladies.



Fig. 54.—1540

The high-necked shirt became universal with both men and women after 1550 ; the top edge was worn

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in a miniature ruffle and called a partlet strip. As will be seen in Fig. 55 A, the shape of the sleeve had entirely changed from the loose bell form, with the stiffened under-sleeve (Fig. 54), to a tight-fitting one with large padded puffs at the shoulder. This latter shape remained fashionable well into the 80's. The square neck-line introduced at the end of the fifteenth century remained in favour until the closing years of Elizabeth's reign.

It will be noticed that although the flat cap, square-toed shoes, wide shoulders and huge padded sleeves, formed the universal outline to the masculine silhouette from 1500 to 1550, slight changes were taking place in the smaller details, such as the slowly descending waist-line and the ascending height of the neck-line, also the gradual appearance of the trunk-hose.

The trunk-hose were, in their first interpretation, formed by the slashing of the upper part of the tights; later the same effect with added magnificence was obtained by the addition of strips of embroidery. It is an essential feature of the sixteenth century that these garments were always worn all in one piece; the upper part or breeches was called the upper-stocks, and the lower part, that covering the foot, calf and thigh, called nether-stocks. The ribbons formed by the slashing were called 'panes'. In their earliest forms the spaces between the panes were stuffed with a silk or satin lining, which could be drawn out through the slits, but later as the

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century advanced these gave place to ridiculous pad-dings of horsehair and rags covered by some gorgeous

A

B



Fig. 55.—1556

material, until the effect was one of a gigantic roll round the hips.

The full-skirted waistcoat or doublet—or the added

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full skirt—gave place to the straight doublet seen in Fig. 55 B about 1550, and a few years later started to lose its skirts entirely (Fig. 56). This example shows the upper-stocks with a tight-fitting hip-yoke



Fig. 56.—1555

typical of these garments in their early stages of advancement. The panes cut slantwise and embroidered and reaching only from the top of the leg—later we see them cut to the waist—the new doublet

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or jerkin without skirts, and the 'mock-coat', a cloak with imitation sleeves, are all fashions directly traceable to the Spanish influence during Queen Mary's reign. The influence of Philip of Spain on the English traditional costume was marked to a degree. Although many men still adhered to the old German styles with their wide padded shoulders and knee-length gowns, the new idea of a fitting doublet and a short cape or mock-coat was definitely establishing itself with a precedence.

From 1553 until the accession of Elizabeth, 1558, women's clothes changed hardly at all. Mary clung tenaciously to the fashion of her father's court, and except for the bodice, or stomacher as it was called, being cut to a V shape instead of the straight line in front, and the already-mentioned change in sleeves, little or nothing happened to change the silhouette. With headdresses, however, there certainly were several changes during the early 50's. The circular coif or caul headdress, already described (Fig. 54), lost popularity due to its extreme weight and discomfort, and little close-fitting caps, beautifully embroidered, were for some years the foundation of most designs in headdresses. Over these were worn the masculine cap or hat, and also the heart-shaped cap associated with that unhappy Queen, Mary Queen of Scots.

Before the close of this chapter it is necessary perhaps to say one or two things in regard to footwear. During the closing years of the fifteenth cen-

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rury the hose with felt or leather soles—worn during the latter Middle Ages—gave place to a round-toed slipper, like a mule, with no heel. This, later, for reasons of practicability, was tied with strings round the ankle, and about 1510 had about one inch covering at the heel. The toe then became square and padded, following the traditional tendencies of the period, linings being drawn out through slashings across the toes. Soft coloured leather boots were worn for riding from the beginning of the period until about 1540. The fashion for square toes somewhat abated during the 50's and an altogether higher-cut shoe took its place, slightly pointed or rounded at the toe and with a turned-back 'collar' at the ankle. Slashings were still the vogue.

One other point to remember: throughout this period it is impossible to dwell with exaggeration upon the profusion of exotic ornamentation that adorned every garment. It is equally impossible in drawings of this size to reproduce one-tenth of the embroideries, bejewelling and general magnificence of brilliant silks and velvets. Let it be borne in mind, therefore, that practically every square inch of the garments shown in these pages was either covered in jewels, pearls or embroideries, or furred, slashed and guarded to excess, and with this fact in mind one may gain some inkling of the barbaric splendour of Henry VIII's Court.

CHAPTER IV

Elizabeth to James I—1558-1625

THE opening years of Queen Elizabeth's reign witnessed the decline and fall of the old order of headdresses, finished at the back with a veil. And also saw the general adoption of a cap or bonnet as a head-covering which was to stay in favour, with few interruptions, until the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Fig. 57 A, B and C show the new though transitory styles adopted during the 60's and early 70's; a certain flatness was the general tendency in direct contrast to the circular cauls of a few years earlier. The heart-shaped bonnet eventually became the most popular form of headdress, and with this the old style of hairdressing departed. No longer was the hair parted in the middle, and worn smoothly drawn across the brow, but it was brushed back from the forehead, puffed at the sides, waved and padded to fill the gaps formed by the double curve. (See Fig. 57 A and D.)

And later still, from about 1585, the hair was fuzzed, crimped and curled over wire frames. Indeed, from 1580 to the death of Anne of Den-

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mark, 1619, the hair received more attention than it had since the twelfth century. Dyeing was generally fashionable, red or saffron being the favourite shades, pads and switches of false hair were arranged

A



B



C



D



Fig. 57.—1555-70

over the wire frames to add to an insufficient natural supply, and wigs became increasingly fashionable. Elizabeth herself was supposed to have owned several hundred at this time. No attempt at naturalness was aimed at, and certainly none achieved; a fashionable lady might appear at successive functions with

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a different-coloured head of hair for each occasion without raising the scandalous whispers that the



Fig. 58.—1560

same behaviour might arouse to-day. Wreaths and borders and tiny caps were worn, and the hair became the nesting-place for countless rings, jewels

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and pearls that could not be judiciously affixed elsewhere about the person.

Large beaver and velvet caps, richly ornamented and trimmed with feathers, were perched at a precarious and jaunty angle on top of the complicated hairdressing.

Numerous, indeed, were the changes that took place during the 60's, and the introduction of new ideas found favour in the eyes of a young queen. One of the most charming styles adopted at this period was that for a flared, puff-sleeved mantle, which was worn over the kirtle and gown (Fig. 58), and hung straight from the shoulders in deep folds, increasing in fullness towards the hem. This mantle was trimmed with wide bands of velvet or embroideries, pearls or jewels being added on those worn by the wealthy. The short full sleeve was finished at the elbow with a tight band.

The Spanish farthingale (Fig. 62 A), a hooped contraption of tapes and rings, came into fashion in this country during the 50's, and its more or less general adoption led to the bell-shaped skirts typical of the 60's and 70's. Another step in the advancement of fashionable details was the introduction of starch in 1564. As every young woman of fashion took lessons in the art of starching, the style for ruffles became widespread. The great problem of stiffening them having been successfully negotiated, there was no obvious check to the increase in size and

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competition in this direction, and from about 1570 until 1620 ruffles and collars grew to startling proportions.

The earliest form of starch used in this country was yellow in tone, imparting a somewhat rich creamy shade to the material. This colour was only fashionable, however, for a few years, and after the hanging of a notorious woman wearing a 'yellow ruff', the starch changed its tone to blue which tint it has retained to this day.

The square-cut gown typical of the early Tudors did not entirely lose favour throughout the century but after the 60's it was not universal, and frequently the bodice or stomacher came right up to the throat. Neither did the introduction of the puffed shoulder and tight sleeve deter from the general popularity of the full, bombasted and slashed sleeves. These, indeed, attained even greater dimensions during the 90's than at any previous date, and if possible, even more luxuriant ornamentation.

During the late 70's an entirely new contour was introduced with the French farthingale. This farthingale consisted of a hoop, several feet in diameter, fixed to the waist with a series of tapes, the whole tilted down in the front (Figs. 60 A and 62 B). The skirt worn over this was of necessity exceedingly full, the gathers radiating from the waist of the stomacher, like the sun's rays. Sometimes a sort of basque was worn over the skirt reaching to the edge of the hoop, and later during the 90's a gigantic ruffle, in

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magnified repetition to the one at the throat, was worn resting upon the hoop.

As in the case of most extreme fashions, some less exaggerated form had to be introduced to fill



Fig. 59.—1575

the requisites of the more modest minded, and a sort of semicircular bolster was introduced for this purpose, which tied with tapes in front, over the petticoat but under the gown itself; these skirts



Fig. 60.—1585

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were always split up the front, showing a contrasting underskirt in movement.

With the new French silhouette the stomacher became elongated to a point about eight or ten inches below the waist in front. A more restricting corset was introduced to give the added flatness below the waist. This V-shaped stomacher was stiffened and often worn at a slight angle to the body, fitting closely at the breast but sloping away from the waist and resting its point on the tilted front of the farthingale. In some cases it must have been an entirely false front to the gown, as there are contemporary portraits which show the hand hidden behind it. The 80's and 90's showed the fashion in its extreme, when the human figure appears distorted beyond recognition and tight-lacing was accentuated by the addition of bolsters above and below the corset.

The insistence of brilliant gewgaws, pearls and precious stones of all kinds predominates throughout the century, but the last twenty years show a lack of design in their profuse use. Odd brooches and pins and hair adornments seem to have been attached at random. Quantities of rings and necklaces and ear-rings proclaimed the wealth of their wearers, but no comprehensive attempt at simplicity as a background for wealth seems to have been attempted. Those who followed the French styles let themselves go wholeheartedly into an elaborate orgy of luxuriance and dazzling decoration.

Elizabeth to James I—1558-1625

Here again we find the two entirely different outlines that were fashionable at the same time ; the



Fig. 61.—1587

Spanish influence still held sway and, as will be seen in Fig. 60, presented a marked contrast to Fig. 61,

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which is comparatively the same date. The short slightly pointed stomacher, plain sleeves with the



Spanish

Fig. 62 A

1599



French

Fig. 62 B

emphasis at the shoulder, and the bell-shaped skirt vied in popularity with the more exotic styles just described.

Elizabeth to James I—1558-1625

Men's fashions started to change with startling rapidity during the 60's; between 1560 and 1620



Fig. 63 A.—1567

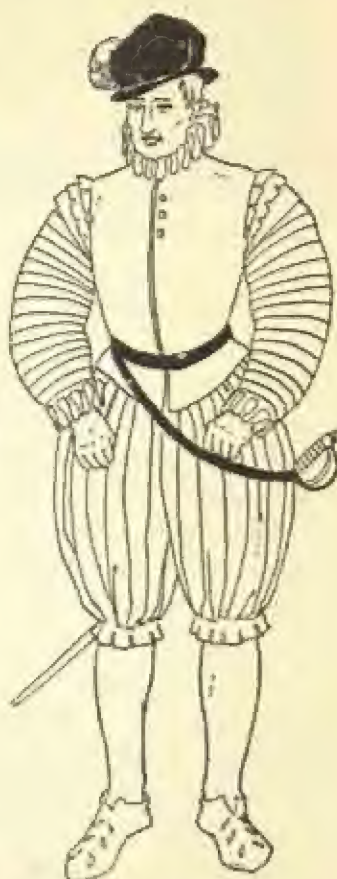


Fig. 63 B.—1570

practically every conceivable shape in breeches had made its appearance.

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As the doublet became shorter more attention was paid to the trunk-hose. It will be clearly seen in Fig. 58 B and C the panes started from the hips at the side and generally reached to mid-thigh, they were stuffed with an assortment of rags and horse-hair and exaggerated to the nth degree, until they resembled a giant pumpkin in contour. The assortment of rubbish that went to their stuffing was discreetly covered with a lining of some fine material, which could be drawn out at will through the panes, forming a contrast in its puckered gatherings.

Venetians, a sort of padded and quilted knee-breeches (Figs. 63 B and 65) came into fashion in this country about 1572. They were worn with a short nether-stock and usually tied at the knee with a wide ribbon.

Continental fashions were being introduced into England in a bewildering variety, and at such a speed that the would-be gallant had an impossible standard of finery to contend with and was perpetually out of fashion. However, some satisfaction must have been gained in the fact that although one new fashion temporarily eclipsed that of a previous year's, when it was established the styles of an earlier date once more made their appearance.

Fig. 60 B shows yet another type of leg-covering ; these were called trunk-hose with canions, the canion being the tight-fitting extension covering the thigh. Separate nether-stocks were worn over these. A further arrangement of the same idea can be seen

Elizabeth to James I—1558-1625

in Fig. 64. This squareness must have been obtained with the help of wires. A and B show the distinctive contours—one with the panes worn neatly arranged outside, the other with the lining pulled through in puffs completely concealing the panes. This square-shaped trunk-hose was not worn until the 90's.

Fig. 63 A shows the 'open breechers', which made their appearance during the 80's but did not become particularly fashionable. The same idea was introduced again some fifty years later and met with approval and general adoption in the nether-garments of the cavalier.

It was not until James I's reign that breeches established themselves as a whole and separate garment, and trunk-hose were eventually abandoned in exchange for these in about 1615. Fig. 66 shows them in their fullest version, resembling in contour the latest edition of the trunk-hose (Fig. 69).

Having dealt at some length upon the eccentricities of the nether-garments of Elizabethan England, we will now return to the doublets and coats.

With the advancement of the 70's the doublet began to swell, with startling rapidity, into a point over the stomach. This very hideous fashion assumed the proportion of a gigantic hooked nose, the tip of the 'nose' projecting several inches beyond and below the belt. It was very aptly termed the peascod-belly doublet (Figs. 59 B and 60 B). This fashion reached its most exaggerated and ridiculous form during the late 80's, and after that date slowly shrank



Fig. 64.—1595

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back to normal, and at the close of Elizabeth's reign, 1602, had entirely disappeared.



Fig. 65.—1595

After this fashion had somewhat abated in its deformity, the 'skirts' of the doubler once more



Fig. 66.—1612

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made their appearance, and were cut up into square flaps called 'tassets'—the easier to fit over the gigantic trunk-hose and breeches of the time (Figs. 66 and 69).

If the sleeves were not shaped in the full padded style, they were usually finished at the shoulder with 'wings' or rolls of material or 'picadils'.

These 'picadils' should have been explained earlier in the book, at the time of their introduction about 1520. They were a form of ornamentation which lasted with unchallenged popularity till the close of the Tudor dynasty; and consisted of a tubular roll of material cut at equal intervals almost severing the tube, and worn only on curved surfaces so that the lits might be pulled apart, leaving each separate section of tube standing up in a minute roll. This can be seen under the ruffle in Fig. 58 and on the shoulders of Figs. 61 and 66. Hanging sleeves from the shoulders formed the fashion from 1580 till the late 30's of the seventeenth century, and were worn by both sexes (Figs. 61, 62 and 67).

Short cloaks and mock-coats were worn universally throughout this period, and a long loose gown with hanging sleeves, heavily decorated with braid and embroideries, was worn as a sort of informal dress—and by elderly gentlemen—from about 1575 to 1620 (Fig. 68). These gowns were often lined with fur.

At about the same time that women's hairdressing became complicated and exaggerated, men started to

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wear theirs long again. First to the lobe of the ear, then shoulder-length, and about 1595 a fashion for



Fig. 67.—1616

'ear-locks', later called love-locks, became very popular for the younger generation. These locks



Fig. 68.—1610

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were worn only in front, the back hair remaining short. Probably because the high collars and ruffles



Fig. 69.—1513

interfered too much with hair longer than a short 'bob'.

Elizabeth to James I—1558-1625

Hats of various shapes and sizes were worn during the whole of this period, 1558 to 1623. They were made from a variety of imported materials, including felt, beaver and velvet of practically every hue—and as long as they were trimmed with a band of cord, lace or jewels, any shape might be worn.

In 1556 the Queen made a half-hearted attempt to revive the collapsing wool trade in England by ordering every man with an income of less than £40 to wear a woollen cap. This decree had no noticeable effect on the fashions in headgear and the hat continued in popularity, reaching its highest crown about 1595 (Fig. 65).

As the early Tudor times may be remembered for a certain heaviness and solidity, reflected in its rich materials, bold designs, full protruding slashings, and ponderous ornaments of gold and silver and precious stone of unbelievable size and profusion, so may the Elizabethan era be remarked for its brittleness and mock-sincerity: the hollow farthingales, the false stomachers, and peascod doublets, the monstrous ruffles and starched collars of vague transparency. Little patterns resembling minute metal-work covering vast surfaces, tiny slashings, edgings of lace of exquisite workmanship—were swallowed up in the composite of a dozen different excesses and a complete lack of understanding as to where ornament should give place to design.

Even the new forms of design of about 1590



Fig. 70.—1595

Elizabeth to James I—1558-1625

showed a realism of treatment and an utter disregard for repetition to such an extent that the majority



Fig. 71.—1610

of materials rather resembled a child's scrap-book than anything else (Fig. 70).

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James I's reign saw little change from these already-mentioned styles. Anne of Denmark favoured the French farthingale in spite of James's repeated onslaught upon its undesirable qualities and not until 1618 does it disappear. Slight modifications in the shape of the stomacher took place during the opening years of the seventeenth century. The false V front gave place to a very corseted short V, the neck became very *décolleté*, the breasts frequently visible above the square or rounded corsage, and a deep laced ruff took the place of the smaller one of earlier years. When the ruff was not worn huge curving collars took its place (Fig. 71 A, B and C).

CHAPTER V

Charles I to James II—1625-84

WHEN Charles I came to the throne in 1625, the old styles of Elizabeth and James I quickly disappeared, giving place to an entirely new outline, the differences being most marked by a new freedom and negligence, which governed practically all the styles at this time. The bombast and general stiffness which was so typical of these last two reigns was succeeded by a wealth of soft materials—laces, spot muslins, ribbons, dainty patterns—and perhaps most noticeable of all, a studied nonchalance in hairdressing. Soft colourings, pinks and pale blues, succeeded the rather harsh brilliance of a decade ago; embroideries of exquisite fineness adorned the backs of gloves, shoes, sword belts, boot-hose, stockings and the tassets on the doublets (Fig. 75). And in some strange way, the cut of the clothes emphasized these refinements instead of obliterating them as had previously been the case. This new softness proved the ideal background for exquisite workmanship.

In Fig. 72 A there still remains an armorial air about the cut of the doublet; a padded solidity about the

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chest, which had quite disappeared by 1630. Here in these two figures can be seen the new style in hairdressing which had made its appearance some twenty-five years earlier, but now became more popular and more and more nonchalant in its effect,



Fig. 72

the back hair rarely reached beyond the top of the collar ; but the love-locks were made much of, being tied with bows of ribbon and curled and fizzed to excess. In the more exaggerated French styles of the period the hair rather resembled a bird's nest

Charles I to James II—1625-84

than a head of human hair. Long hair for men had become an established fashion by 1620 to last,



Fig. 73.—1624

in effect, including wigs, of course, for nearly 200 years.

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Beards and moustaches were practically always worn, the former being cut in a point, the latter curled and waxed.

With the exception of a leather jerkin (Figs. 73 and 76 A), which reached to mid-thigh and was generally worn for some ten or fifteen years, the doubles were all cut to the waist and finished by the addition of the all-popular 'tassets' (Fig. 72 A and B). Later the idea was imitated, as seems to have been the case with an incredible amount of fashions, and the same effect was achieved or attempted with false bows of ribbon, serving no purpose, and mock-tassets (Figs. 74 A and 75).

The full short trunks (Figs. 74 C and B and 72 A), relics of an earlier period, were still worn in England until about 1627. But the newer French modes embraced slightly full knee-breeches worn just below the knee, the sides buttoned or tied, and during the 20's and early 30's, left undone some four inches above the knee to show the linings at the side (Fig. 72 B and D). The knees became one of the centres of adornment, and if they were not tied with a wide and ornate garter, the breeches always finished with bows of ribbon, tassels, lace or ornamentation of some kind. Boots, boot-hose, and decorated stocking-tops played an important rôle in the dress of a gallant from the late 20's till the close of the 60's.

The stocking-tops were worn over the ordinary hose ; the habit of wearing two or even three pairs

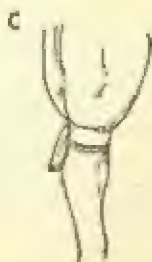


Fig. 74 1630

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was prevalent from 1625 to the end of the century. Boot-hose had originally served the useful purpose of preventing too much friction from the ill-fitting boots of the period upon the somewhat fragile and extremely expensive hose ; now their practicability was challenged by their merits as an entirely decorative furbelow (Fig. 72 B).

The ridiculous bucket-top boot became a necessary part of outdoor dress. These were so numerous and variegated in cut and design that it is quite impossible to give a comprehensive description of all their forms and vagaries. Fig. 72 C shows one of the more exaggerated styles. Nearly always the instep was decorated with an enormous butterfly flap of leather. These boots were the recipients of the satirists' jibes, and were ridiculed and exaggerated by contemporary writers and artists alike—not, however, to their ultimate detriment in the eyes of fashion, for they lasted well in favour until after the Restoration. Sleeves were somewhat varied in design during Charles I's reign—possibly the full sleeve, split up the outside from wrist to shoulder and showing the silk or satin shirt, was the most generally worn, but slashed sleeves, and those composed entirely of loosely hanging ribbons, were almost equally popular.

The most striking and universal items, however, from 1625–50 were the huge lace collars and cuffs immortalized by Van Dyck. These were worn by every one from king to kitchen-maid. The high-

Charles I to James II—1625-84

crowned and small-brimmed hats of a preceding quarter of a century vanished amidst an overwhelm-



Fig. 75.—1631

ing popularity for large-brimmed flopping hats decorated lavishly with feathers—another fashion that outlasted the century.

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A startling difference will be seen in the women's clothes worn during the first twenty years of the century and those worn after Henrietta Maria came to England, bringing with her the latest thing in French fashions. This complete and rapid change may be accounted for in some sense by the fact that England had no Queen for some seven years, and the Court had entertained no women during that period. With the re-establishment of a Queen—albeit unpopular but nevertheless a Queen—the ladies were quick to mimic the French fashions, and in no period in the history of costume has the change been so completely revolutionary. Gone were the V-shaped stomachers, the bombasted sleeves, the hooped skirts, the curled wigs, the chalked faces and dyed hair, ruffles and thick-soled shoes—all rendered ridiculous by the newer styles in violent contrast.

The stomacher was U-shaped, while it lasted, for some ten years, and frequently finished after the masculine style with 'tassets'; the waist-line was very high, several inches above the natural waist in many instances; the skirts were full and soft, still usually split up the front to show the petticoat beneath. The sleeves were rather complex for some five or ten years, the general idea being that the gown had a short split sleeve from elbow to shoulder, and under this a false sleeve composed entirely of ribbons held in place by the gown sleeve tying just above the elbow, and through the apertures between the ribbons the full sleeves of the 'smock' or under-

Charles I to James II—1625-84

garment made their appearance (Fig. 77). During the 30's this fashion disappeared, to be supplanted by the full three-quarter-length sleeve (Figs. 74 D and 76 B) with huge ruffled cuffs. The first time in the



Fig. 76.—1635

history of English fashion that a woman's forearm was left bare.

Curiously similar styles prevailed in the arrangement of men's and women's hair; except that in the woman's case her hair was done up at the back whilst the man's was cut short. The usual method

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of doing up the hair was with a circular plait rolled round the back of the head (Fig. 77 A), the curls in



Fig. 77.—1635

the front becoming more and more profuse as the century advanced towards the 70's.

Very essential were such little things as furs and

Charles I to James II—1625-84

muffs, masks, hoods and veils at this time, and indeed throughout the century; umbrellas also were known after about 1630. John Evelyn bought one in France in 1644.

The high waist was typical only of the 20's and 30's. After 1640 it started once more to assume normal proportions and again tight-lacing became fashionable, and as seems to have usually been the case with the renewed use of these artifices, the waist began to descend once more to a deep V in front.

The attractive fashion of 'tucked' petticoats, giving a pannier effect, was started towards the close of the 20's, to last without interruption for nearly 100 years. Probably the fashion started with the introduction of a longer skirt, and the shocking condition of the streets brought about by complete lack of drainage necessitated lifting the skirts, which could be more easily managed if pinned or folded up—also in this manner the petticoat beneath could be shown off to fuller advantage.

The 40's, which should in the interests of history be typified by a certain sobriety and decorum in matters of dress, rather shatter one's illusion when studiously examined. If anything the existing contemporary works show an excess of ornament and exaggerated ostentatiousness, accompanied by a brevity of line that is quite inadequate as a background for so much decoration.

Fig. 79 A shows the new cut of coat in one of its more sober moods. Some of these were so brief as



Fig. 78.—1644

Charles I to James II—1625-84

to expose several inches of flowing silk skirt between the coat and breeches. They were called 'jack-anapes' coats, and the loosely hanging short breeches soon became the full-skirted garments alluded to in



Fig. 79

Pepys immortal diary—'This morning I rose and put on my suit with great skirts . . . Jan. 1, 1659' (Fig. 79 B). The same figure would answer equally well to his description ' . . . Black cloth suit



Fig. 8a—1663

Charles I to James II—1625-84

trimmed with scarlet ribbon, very neat, and my cloake lined with velvet . . . a new beaver hat which alltogether is very noble with my black silk knit canions.' Lace was used upon these suits in a bewildering quantity, many of them indeed being laced all over. The sleeves were of almost any length and cut, possibly those cut at the elbow and finished with a large cuff or bunch of ribbons, so that they showed the masses of silk and lace that did service as a shirt sleeve were the more popular, though the split sleeve from shoulder to wrist can still be seen in great quantities until the close of the 60's. The bewildering addition of lace and ribbon at the waist, hems, shoulders and toes defies adequate description (Fig. 80). Even the contemporary writers of the time seem somewhat staggered by the extravagances. John Evelyn writes in 1661, 'Clad in the fantastic habits of the time . . .'

During the late 50's the periwig became fashionable for men, their natural hair having been curled and crimped and adorned with ribbons to the extent when nature was no longer sufficiently generous for their requirements, the curled periwig with its profusion of ringlets solved the problem. Curious though it may seem, Pepys had his hair cut off in 1663 and made into a periwig, which certainly seems carrying a fashion to unnecessary lengths.

One of the most noticeable changes during the 50's was the abandonment of the Van Dyck collar in favour of a square stiffened one for men, and

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later, about 1670 this disappeared, to be replaced by a long lace scarf, worn wound round the neck and tied with a profusion of ribbons under the chin (Fig. 81). The latter style, however, did not occur until some years after the introduction of the new long coat, 1665. The fashion for the short 'jack-anapes' coat had completely gone out by 1668, and the long-skirted one, once firmly established, remained in unchallenged favour for over a century. In its original stages the skirts of the coat were hardly shaped at all, and it hung loosely from the shoulder to display the new garment, the vest or waistcoat; the latter was cut on the same lines, usually with sleeves. The waist was emphasized not by any shaping, but by tying a silk or lace sash over the coat. The breeches changed in style to suit the coat, and instead of being open at the bottom they were gathered in like plus-fours (Fig. 80) and by about 1670 had almost disappeared beneath the skirt of the coat. The tendency to ornament them still remained, however, for a few years (Fig. 81 A and B).

With the exception of the lowered waist and a rounded neck-line (Fig. 78), and possibly a little more lace and ribbons, the ladies' fashions changed hardly at all until the time of the Restoration. Then for a short period of some ten years, we find the rather peculiar styles of Fig. 82—a long exaggerated corsage emphasized by the depth of collar, which usually fitted tightly over the shoulders to the elbows, all the fullness of the sleeves had to come beneath this.

Charles I to James II—1625-84

Should the woman not wish to have her collar to her throat, the one exception seems to have been the extreme reverse, right off the shoulder ; but still it must fit snugly over the upper part of the arm (Fig. 83). False hair was often added at this time to compete to some extent with the ridiculously



Fig. 81.—1670

enlarged heads of the men, and bows of ribbon were usually worn. The 70's marked a new era in ladies' fashions, possibly with the arrival of Charles II's younger sister and Louise de K roualle who came to England in 1670 to entice Charles II into coalition with Louis XIV. This famous lady wore her hair in an entirely new style—a style now associated with

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portraits of Nell Gwynne and paintings by Peter Lely. The sides of the hair were cut and curled and puffed in a mass of ringlets brushed away from the centre parting; the back hair was worn long and arranged over the shoulders in inviting ringlets



Fig. 82.—1660

(Fig. 84). Those who did not care to follow this fashion wore theirs cut fairly short and curled all over, a fringe or 'fontange' in front and the back tied in a 'boss' or mass of curls at the nape of the neck. Over this was worn a tight-fitting cap with bunches of ribbon in the front, the skeleton of the 'pinner' to come (Fig. 85 A). As these curls

Charles I to James II—1625-84

took some time to arrange correctly—and inclement weather works havoc on the iron-wave—scarves and



Fig. 83.—1665

hoods and lace bonnets were used to cover the head when outdoors (Figs. 85 B and 86). Not only did

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the French fashions pertain to hairdressing. Skirts were less full but nearly always ornamented at the



Fig. 84.—1670

hem, and the outer gown assumed the dignity of a train. In many cases this 'train' was entirely

A



B



C



Fig. 85.—1670

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separate, being fastened on to the petticoat-bodice across the back ; it was always worn folded up,



Fig. 86.—1680

except for special occasions (Fig. 85 A). The tight-lacing was less stiff and more curved, the convex

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shaping pushing the breasts upwards and leaving a ridge at the top of the corsage, to be discreetly



Fig. 87.—1688

covered with a rather informal arrangement of lace fichu—in direct contrast to the \cap -shaped shoulders of the previous decade. The sleeves of the gown

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were always short, showing the excessive fullness of the silk and laced smock beneath.

Tiny floral patterns decorated nearly all the materials ; sometimes these were painted on to the ' taffetys ' and ' tabbys ' but more often embroidered with painstaking realism. Ribbons and lace were used in a bewildering profusion on all the items in a lady's wardrobe.

One other fashion worthy of note was the general use of paint and powder, patches and lip-rouge, introduced during the 50's, possibly in blatant defiance of the bigoted Protector. John Evelyn remarks its general adoption in 1654.

CHAPTER VI

James II to George III—1685-1760

THIS chapter is split into two distinct sections, from 1685-1714 and 1714-60.

The clothes women wore during the last three Stuart reigns were as distinct from those worn at the Courts of the German Georges as any two consecutive fashions could be.

The sudden change can best be remarked by the study of the works of the late Peter Lely and Godfrey Kneller, in contrast to those of Hogarth and Watteau. Curiously enough, all the artists of the late Stuart period favoured a pseudo-classic style of dress, rather than the somewhat formal fashion so typical of the day. For this reason the contemporary portraiture is sadly lacking in authentic representation of the everyday garments that were then in use.

By about 1685 the low curved waist-line had disappeared in preference to a normal one; the petticoat-bodice was made tightly fitting the figure, and usually laced down the front with ribbons, in contrast to the loose sleeve with big 'cuffs' at the elbow. Skirts were fuller again and the bunched-up petticoat was still fashionable to the end of the

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century. Tiny patterns, spots, plaids and stripes were all exceedingly fashionable (Figs. 87 and 88).

Long gloves of kid and chamois were nearly



1685



1687

Fig. 88.

always worn outdoors, covering the forearm made bare by the increasingly short sleeves.

About 1690 the folded and bunched train at the

James II to George III—1685-1760

back of the gown suggested a new silhouette, and the first bustle made its appearance. This was not composed of wires as was the case in the better-known bustle of 1870, but a very similar effect was obtained by a padded roll tied across the waist at the back under the petticoat. A curious kind of waistcoat or corset also made its appearance during the 90's (Fig. 89 A). This was braced and stiffened with embroideries, and resembled armour of a grotesque and richly decorated style. Quite often it was worn outside the entire gown, but more often over the chemisette or smock, as a sort of morning *deshabille*.

Curiously enough this armorial air penetrated into all forms of decoration during the 90's. The decoration of garments, instead of being ribbons and lace, favoured ornate designs resembling ironwork, gold and silver thread and thick gold fringes and tassels being intermittently enlivened by the addition of jewels and semi-precious stones. Buckles and large paste brooches, locketts and hair ornaments came back into fashion after an interval of about eighty years.

It was also about 1685 that the informality in women's hairdressing was supplanted by an eccentric fashion which lasted some fifteen or twenty years, practically to the exclusion of any other styles. This was a cap or bonnet, with various etceteras—generally termed the 'commode'. Of the several items that went to the composition of this head-

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dress, the 'pinner' or 'settee' played the most important part, this being a starched and pleated frill arranged on wires to stand up in front—to be seen clearly in Fig. 89 B, C, D and E.



Fig. 89.—1690

Fig. 89 B shows the 'settee' or double pinner. A bunch of ribbon was tied behind the pinner (Figs. 89 B, C and E) and called a sorti; sometimes another was added in front.

So complex were the varieties and arrangements

James II to George III—1685-1760

of the 'commode', and as every item of the whole had its French title, it is impossible to devote the space requisite to its entire explanation in so brief a volume. It is quite definite, however, that this headdress could be worn in parts or in its fullest arrangement with equal correctitude for formal or informal occasions. Thus a 'Flandan' or 'Frelange'—meaning the pinner joined to the bonnet—might be worn at the same social gathering as the pinner and sorti (Fig. 89 E) alone.

During the 80's the hair arrangement beneath the commode did not receive the attention that it did during the 90's, it was sufficient for it to be drawn back from the face with a few curls visible, the back hair often done up (Fig. 89 E). But about '89 a sort of standardized arrangement took place, and every would-be fashionable lady had to carefully study the trend of fashion which demanded a uniformity which was truly absurd (Fig. 89 A, B and D).

Each curl had its allotted position and title; thus the two 'horns' curled up in front from the forehead were called 'Frontange' after Madame Frontange, Louis XIV's mistress, and were supported by a wire called a 'palisade'. (These horns are typical features of the headdress of the 90's, and the first ten years of the following century, for both men and women.)

Next the 'Passague' or curled locks either side of the temples; 'Confidets', the curls in front of the ears; the 'Chevre Cœur' or heart-breakers,

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being the curls at the nape of the neck ; and lastly, should any small curls escape on the forehead, they were called ' cruches '. The whole arrangement could be finished with the addition of pearls and enamel ornaments set between the horns. One cannot believe that this was one of the fashions which added to a woman's attractions, and the further addition of ' mouches ' or patches in lavish quantities and numerous designs could hardly have enhanced their beauty. However, the fashion lasted for several years, and even after the abandonment of the pinner in its towering dignity (about 1705), the same mode of hairdressing remained until the death of Queen Anne.

Men's fashions from this time onwards (1685) ceased to change with the startling rapidity typical of the earlier years of the century, and apart from slight alterations, such as a longer sleeve, fuller skirts bigger cuffs, and a rearrangement from time to time of the neck-tie or cravat, remained fundamentally the same for some sixty years.

The enlargement of the petiwig was one of the most noticeable tendencies of the late 80's. This followed the styles adopted by women in its curled uniformity (Figs. 90 B and C and 92). But as will be noticed in Fig. 90 C, the back was usually separated into two thick masses of curls at the bottom and a flatness extending over the back of the head to meet the mass of upstanding curls in front. The later and perhaps better-known wig called a full-

James II to George III—1685-1760

bottomed wig was more general ; this was divided into three masses, one over each shoulder and one at the back.



Fig. 90.—1689

Powdering the wig became prevalent during the 90's, but as these wigs were coloured the effect was merely a sort of grey haze, which matted the 'curls' into a universal 'woolliness'.

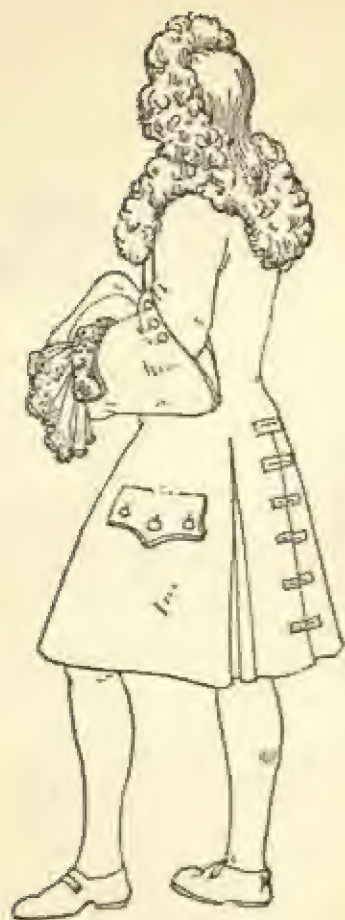


Fig. 91.—1716

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Fig. 88 a shows the slightly shaped coat, with huge cuffs and long waistcoat, which was generally in favour in 1685.

In contrast, Fig. 90 b and c show the shaped waist and full split skirts of five years later. Breeches were no longer visible below these long skirts and the stockings, tied above the knee, covered what little might have otherwise shown. The long waistcoat sleeve fashionable for several years appears beneath the great cuff in Fig. 91. Muffs were worn at the waist, and hats were carried, their necessity as a head-covering being mitigated by the introduction of the large full-bottomed wigs by all fashionable gentlemen.

The ostentatious sophistication of the Stuarts after the Restoration lapsed with startling suddenness into the somewhat frivolous negligence, amounting almost to *deshabille*, so typical of the eighteenth century, with the coming of George I.

The new hooped skirt had been seen in England as early as 1711, but its general adoption was not during Queen Anne's reign, although the Court had favoured it from that date.

Probably the old adage of Queen Anne's death might be traced to the abruptness of the dismissal of fashions associated with the last Stuart Queen on her death.

The same shape of gown was worn, but the addition of a loose-fitting over-gown called a '*contouche*'

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(Fig. 93 A and B) completely concealed the form. This contouche in its original use served as a morn-



Fig. 92.—1698

ing gown, but within a few years of its institution it became the chief item of apparel and was worn

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on quite formal occasions. Sometimes it buttoned down the front, sometimes tied with ribbons, and the general negligence typical of the period was evident in the complete disregard as to whether it was



Fig. 93.—1720

tied or left undone. It was from this garment, immortalized by Watteau, that the saque-back eventually materialized, in about 1740 (Fig. 96 A). The saque-back had the folds carefully stitched to accentuate the curves of the figure, with a subtlety that

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compels admiration of the contemporary dress-makers.



Fig. 94.—1725

It will be noticed that the hoop of the eighteenth century was not circular but oval, the narrow side of the ovals extending over each hip (Fig. 94) in its

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first interpretation, 1711-30; the effect was attained by the suspension on tapes from the waist of three or more oval hoops of cane, like a cage. Later it became part of the skirt, the hoops being actually stitched on to the material of the petticoat. Their very stiffness necessitated the flattening at front and back of the oval, so that doorways could be negotiated sideways.

About 1740-5 the hooped skirt was at its height, in more meanings than one. The new method of stiffening the petticoat with the more pliable whalebone led to the vast, short petticoats which swung up at the front or back with the slightest movement (Fig. 95 c).

As white stockings had just been introduced for ladies, contemporary moralists denounced the combination as an indecent display of apparently nude leg. There is an air of informality about these ladies of the 1740's, a pseudo-peasant style which persisted for several years, but with not quite the negligent charm of the tulip-skirted, jaunty-hatted ladies of the 40's. With these large skirts—as has usually been the case—tight-lacing was even more obvious, the stomacher being frequently laced down the front, and the seams boned to add to the stiff effect. The materials used for these farthingales had to be considerably lighter than those worn in the late Stuart period, such quantities were required, and in consequence dainty hand-painted silks and muslins came into vogue.

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It is a curious fact that the general cut of the bodice remained almost identical from the introduction of the hoop or farthingale, until its abandonment in 1780 ; this was always figure fitting with



Fig. 95.—1740

a slightly V-shaped stomacher, either frilled or laced, the neck opening cut very low and square, sometimes disguised as a V by the addition of a laced or frilled fichu ; the sleeves tight to the elbow, where a little

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licence was allowed in the arrangement of frills of deep lace.

Perhaps the most drastic changes from Stuart to Hanoverian fashions were to be seen in the head-tying. The commodious and elaborate arrangement of curls was succeeded by a simplicity so startling that it might be classed as a complete lack of enterprise on the part of the ladies of the time. From about 1714 until 1735 the hair was just tucked away in the most inconspicuous manner beneath a microscopic cap (Fig. 93 B), which began slowly to increase in size till the 30's, when it assumed the dimensions of what is now known as the mob-cap. During the late 20's and early 30's a little frilled veil was sometimes worn (Fig. 94). Should a hat be required—which was rare—this was absurdly small, and made like a miniature edition of the male headgear, with the addition of a minute feather (Fig. 93 C). Fig. 93 D shows the masculine headdress adopted by ladies when riding.

It was with the coming of the gigantic farthingale of 1740 that hats became increasingly popular. These were also of the pseudo-peasant style and were worn either over the cap or directly on the now-curved head. The brims grew in size as the crowns diminished, and by about 1750 were practically all brim and no crown (Figs. 96 A and 97). They were always tied under the chin with ribbons, the same ribbons being used to swing them nonchalantly in the approved style when they were not being worn. Tiny bunches

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of flowers and ribbons frequently adorned the crown. There was nothing ostentatious about the decoration of this period, all adornments being of a very delicate fragility, particularly noticeable in the designs used to decorate the materials. These designs were, practically without exception, all floral, and usually



Fig. 96.—1745

represented tiny bunches of flowers tied with lovers' knots.

About 1730 aprons had been worn with morning-dress, but by 1750 the fashion had become so well established that even the most sophisticated gown might have its little apron. These were often made of transparent material, and were laced and em-

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broidered to match the fichu. One other fashion which was inspired by an informal attire was the little shoulder-cape (Fig. 97), whose original purpose had been a sort of dressing-jacket. This took the place of the 'contouche' in about 1740 and was worn for some twenty or thirty years. Its later composition included a hood.

The changes in men's dress were perhaps more



Fig. 97.—1755

arresting in the abandonment of the full-bottomed wig, about 1718, in favour of a small white or powdered one.

Fig. 91 shows the full-bottomed wig in its most extreme forms. When its impracticability became increasingly tiresome and no further exaggeration could be borne it was dispensed with, with the same abruptness as other extreme fashions are discarded.

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The main lines governing the cut of the masculine coat differ so little between this date and 1740 that perhaps the easiest way to explain them is by the comparison of Figs. 91 and 95 A. Possibly the most noticeable difference was the growing tendency to decorate the coats. In 1720 the materials used were somewhat plain and sombre ; all the decoration was at the cuffs, pockets, or 'tails'. The waistcoat, which usually reached to the knees, received undue attention in the matter of decoration, and was in most cases heavily embroidered.

By 1740 the tendency to decorate had spread and whenever fine embossed and brocaded materials were not used, every edge had its deep embroidered border ; these embroideries followed the general style in using flowers and leaves as their motifs (Figs. 95 and 96 B).

Another contrast in styles will be noticed in the cut of the cuffs ; those of the earlier years were exceedingly deep but not as wide as those worn a few years later. The waistcoat cuff will be seen in Fig. 91 turned back over the plain deep cuff of the coat. The difference in the length of the skirts is slight but more emphasized in width ; indeed, during the 50's they were often stiffened with whalebone. The manner in which they were cut can be clearly seen in Fig. 96 B, c and E. This deeply flared side-piece made of materials stiffened by embroideries and worn over a waistcoat of similar dimensions would quite naturally stand out of its

James II to George III—1685-1760

own accord even without the addition of stiffening, but following the usual evolution of a fashion, each excess must be exaggerated to the point of ridicule before it eventually reaches satiation point and disappears in favour of something entirely new—as the cut-away coats of the 1760's.

The cravat was still composed of a long lace or silk scarf wound several times round the neck and tied in the front, but the ends were shorter to show more of the fine shirt beneath ; sometimes a black ribbon was tied over the cravat in a bow under the chin—the earliest version of the modern collar and tie.

Two kinds of wigs were worn with equal popularity from 1720 till 1760—the bag-wig (Fig. 95 B) and the wig with the pigtail. An abbreviated version of this is to be seen in Fig. 96 B. With these powdered wigs the front hair forming the framing for the face was often natural, and brushed and curled and powdered back over the wig itself to conceal the join. Sometimes natural hair was worn powdered and tied to assimilate the real wig. During the late 50's a certain formality in the arrangement of the wig took place, and rows of curls arranged in twos or threes were placed at the side of the face, the first slight tendency towards the absurdities of the 70's.

Throughout the century the tricorne hat was worn exclusively by men, and although it varied in size slightly and in its earliest stages was decorated

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by feathers, it remained the one and only shape from 1700 till 1780.

Cloaks figured as an important item in the wardrobes of both men and women, and in the latter case were usually red and had hoods attached.

CHAPTER VII

George III to George IV—1760-1820

WITH George III's reign we are confronted with a period of sixty years, thirty of which follow the tendencies already described of the eighteenth century, the last thirty changing with an abruptness now familiar to all students of historic fashions.

Here again we will divide the explanations into two sections for purposes of simplicity.

About 1760 a new adjustable farthingale was introduced; this was composed of hinged iron hoops either side of the waist, with nothing at back and front, extending sometimes as much as three feet from the body. They could be lifted at will to facilitate passing through narrow spaces without the undignified necessity of walking crab-wise (Fig. 98). The material of the skirt was made to fit tightly over these hoops with an incredible exactitude; hardly a crease is visible on the decorated surfaces of these gowns (of which several are still existent in museums). The creaseless surface was a marvellous background for the gigantic embroideries which were becoming more fashionable every year;



Fig 98.—1760

George III to George IV—1760-1820

these designs were inspired to a great extent by the works of the Chinese artists ; Oriental fashions were penetrating into the country not only in designs but in furniture and materials, Japanese silk and Chinese satin being smuggled in great quantities.

Fig. 99 shows all the new tendencies towards the men's fashions of the next decade. The cut-away coat-tails, longer sleeves, and the addition of a collar to the coat, the shorter waistcoat of simpler design, the knee-breeches worn outside the stockings and the low heels, all these things became exaggerated as the century advanced.

With the late 60's came one of the most startling adventures in the mode of hairdressing ever indulged in in this country. This was the high powdered wig, so dear to the heart of fancy-costumiers of future years.

The first inclinations towards higher headdressing was about 1760 when the powdered natural hair was dressed on top of the head instead of at the back, and by about 1765 a slight pad was added to give height to the hair over the forehead. By 1770 the fashion had become an established idea, to be enlarged upon and carried to perfectly ludicrous heights—most absurd between 1778 and 1780. No verbal description can adequately explain the arrangements of these headdresses, but by the careful study of the examples given here some idea of their construction and arrangement can be gained. The natural hair was superimposed by the addition of false curls and



Fig. 99.—1763

George III to George IV—1760-1820

switches, the whole padded with wool and horsehair and laid over a wire frame. In its final stages of dressing it was liberally smeared with pomatum and then powdered. The addition of various feathers and ribbons and bunches of flowers, or pearls, was quite usual for daily wear, the evening-dress etceteras being even more ornate; these took the shape of ships in full sail, coaches, windmills, and various other unsuitable items that typified the advancement of civilization in the mechanical world.



Fig. 100.—1776

As these head-tyrings took such a long time to arrange, the habit of leaving them as a more or less permanent fixture led to the discovery of mice and other less pleasant inhabitants when they were eventually 'undone'!! A huge cap was worn over them at night to keep them in position, so that the next morning only a judicious application of powder and perfume was necessary.

With the grotesque exaggeration of the head the

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simpler style of dress of the 40's and 50's were enlarged upon and decorated ; skirts became increasingly short, the ankle often being visible in the late 70's. And the general tendency to over-ornamenta-



1770



1775

Fig. 101

tion led to layers of pleated frills on the skirts (Figs. 102, 103 A and 104 B). The over-skirt was nearly always decorated at the edges with ruching, lace or a pleated frill, and bunched and puffed with bows of ribbon ; sometimes these bunched over-skirts were



George III to George IV—1760-1820

stuffed with paper (Fig. 104 3) to add to their width, and cause a pleasing rustle in movement.



Fig. 102.—1775

One curious detail will be noticed in Fig. 102 in the style of the child's dress, a simplicity and cut

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which was to be fashionable some fifteen years later for the adult. Whether the clothes worn by the child in 1775 so appealed to the wearers that the same style was readopted when they reached the age of maturity and selection, is a debatable point, but nevertheless both the long trousers for small boys and the high-waisted and sash-tied dresses for girls of the late 70's make their appearance again as established modes in the late 90's.

The hoop or farthingale, as a wire structure, disappeared in 1780, but the skirts hardly became less full for some five years; pads were worn at the waist, and the addition of flounced and stuffed overskirts and aprons made up in bulk what they lacked in whalebone support (Fig. 104 a). Waists were considerably higher during the 80's, and the corset, which was still in use, was made higher, once more pushing the breasts up and forming a ridge several inches higher than nature intended. This fashion lasted to the end of the century, though a somewhat more graceful effect was attained during the 90's. Huge bonnets or hats were worn from about 1775 to cover the head for morning occasions and going to church. The huge 'picture hats' were not worn till about 1785, when the hairdressing had become more reasonable (Fig. 103 b and c). This new style of hairdressing was strangely similar to that worn some 120 years earlier, cut and curled so that it stood out either side of the face, giving width but little height. Powder

George III to George IV—1760-1820

was not used generally after 1785 except for very formal occasions.

An entirely new style asserted itself about this date. This was a sort of pseudo-Greek or Classic



Fig. 103

style and was carried to extremes in France during the closing years of the century, where a practically transparent garment was worn tied high under the breasts, and the hair cut short to be arranged in a riot of somewhat untidy curls. The new clinging

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lines raised an agony of reproach from contemporary moralists, but this did not deter its ultimate adoption in this country about 1800. During the last five years of the 90's the tendency towards a new simplicity and pastoral habits became more marked.

The untidy curly hair, huge mob-caps, big shady hats, heelless shoes and high-waisted gathered skirts, complete with sash and fichu, must have appeared amazingly plain and simple after the frivolous absurdities of the 70's and 80's.

The general tendencies already described in men's clothes became increasingly marked. The cuff diminished in size until by 1780 it had entirely disappeared, and in its place a band or buttons finished the sleeve. The frilled shirt-cuffs likewise shrank beneath the lengthening sleeve until merely an inch or so was visible. The collar increased in size until 1780 (Fig. 104 A), when it frequently stood up to the ears. The waistcoat of 1760-70 was still often embroidered, but a general passion for quilting and stripes soon replaced the older embroidered waistcoat. This shrank in size throughout the period, and by 1780 (Fig. 104 A) the waistcoat pocket had been sacrificed in the name of fashion and 'fobs' hanging beneath the short waistcoat were the mode.

Throughout the decade when women wore their hair in the ridiculous powdered and raised style, men imitated them, in as far as they were permitted,

George III to George IV—1760-1820

by the raising of the wig either just in front (Fig. 105) or all over (Fig. 106), and, by the judicious arrange-



Fig. 104.—1780

ment of the side curls, attained in some measure a similar effect as that worn in less extreme fashion by the ladies.

Those who adopted the extreme styles, called

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Macaroni's, wore an absurd little tricorne hat on top of the wig, striped stockings and waistcoat and



Fig. 103.—1770

cut-away coats, and assumed a feminine languor and an addiction to flowers and snuff. The flat-heeled shoes had large paste or diamond buckles, but other-

George III to George IV—1760-1820

wise the extremes tended not towards gaudy ornaments, but rather relied upon cut and fit to emphasize the extravagances.



Fig. 106.—1775

Wigs were in a great measure dispensed with during the 80's. Those who still clung to them

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wore them small and arranged in two rows of curls with a small curl at the back. The natural hair cut to the lobe of the ear once again was the most usual manner of hairdressing.



Fig. 107

The masculine silhouette of 1790 varied in every essential from that of 1760. The full skirts, big cuffs, powdered wigs and tricorn hats, had been replaced by a cut-away coat, waist-length waistcoat, tight-fitting sleeves, natural hair and hats varying in

George III to George IV—1760-1820

shape, the most popular styles being those shown in Fig. 107 A, B and C.

The panniers and hooped skirts had vanished with their various etceteras, to be replaced by a high-waisted gown, with skirts less liberal than had been seen for over a century. From the 1790's fashion-plates were introduced in this country, and from that time to the present day fashions changed with a lightning rapidity never before realized. Dozens



Fig. 108.—1781

of minor garments such as short capes and coats, fur tippets, scarves, shawls, pelisses, &c., were adopted, altering the standardized styles in a bewildering manner. Curled ostrich feathers as a means of hair decoration and hat trimming were increasingly worn during the 90's, the hair often being dressed by the addition of a 'bandeau' with feathers stuck into it in the front. The mob-cap was not often seen in England after 1790, the pseudo-Greek style for dressing the hair with ribbons and bands having entirely usurped the rage for the pseudo-pastoral.

About 1808 a turban for evening wear became

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popular ; these turbans for the first few years after their introduction were quite in the Turkish style, but later they assumed gigantic proportions, and during the early 30's resembled nothing less than a huge cushion.

In Fig. 107 D the earliest form of poke-bonnet can be seen. This charming fashion first made its appearance on the disappearance of the dressed 'heads', and was worn with slight modifications and exaggerations for some fifty years.

From 1798 to 1809 one fundamental item in women's clothing was remarkable for its absence ; this was the corset. With the coming of the simple clinging little dresses of the French Directoire, literally everything was abandoned which had previously seemed to enhance a lady's charms. It was as complete a revolution from one extreme to another as could be possible.

Hair, heels, jewellery, cosmetics, petticoats and corsets—all were ruthlessly discarded in an endeavour to assume a natural simplicity—possibly a trifle too natural, especially in the case of the rather voluptuous French figures !

Before 1800 the long clinging lines of the French Empire styles had been established in England, and for street wear the dresses and coats were figure-fitting—a style which must have appeared indecently revealing to a generation brought up in farthingales and frills. The closely cut hair, too, was in direct



Fig. 109.—1803

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contrast to the curls and fizz of a decade ago. For nearly ten years the style for a simple high-waisted garment of almost transparent consistency formed the foundation for every ensemble. But this was too daring a fashion to retain its original simplicity for long, and about 1802 the usual arrangement was to supplement the dress with a pelisse or tunic, cut on similar lines but only reaching to mid-thigh or knees (Figs. 109 B and 110). This pelisse could be decorated in any way; sometimes it was split up the front and the sides embroidered, sometimes the hem was cut to points at the back only or back and front, the sleeves might be long or short and the neck high or low, in fact almost any style could be fashionable so long as it was high-waisted and not below the knees.

When the tunic was not worn, another way of disguising a too-daring transparency was devised by the addition of an apron-front. This was made of the same material as the dress, and sewn on just below the breasts at the 'waist'-line, falling to within a few inches of the hem of the skirt. It was usually decorated in some way, either with embroidery all round the sides and hem, or rows of cord or ribbon.

Short coats varying in length were often worn even indoors (Fig. 109 C) as a protection from cold as throughout this decade no heavy materials were used except for the outdoor coats. These were invariably trimmed with fur (Fig. 109 A) and practi-



Fig. 110. 1811



Fig. 111.—1807

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cally always had a deep collar or cape covering the shoulders.

Evening dress was even more classic in design. Simple patterns, like the Greek-key, adorned the edges of the over-gown (the two skirts still being fashionable for evening wear until about 1815). The hair, after about 1805, was often in the growing stages, and could easily be tied in a Clytie knot (Fig. 113 c) or if longer was worn with a circular plait high up at the back of the head (Fig. 111).

The true classic style was somewhat spoilt by the injudicious addition of pieces of lace and artificial flowers. Nevertheless, a charming effect of simplicity was attained, unrivalled by any other period in history, with the possible exception of the late twelfth century. Simplicity, unfortunately, is the one fashion which has the shortest popularity, and all too soon this was spoiled by the unwarranted addition of a dozen knick-knacks and gew-gaws, and a shorter and fuller skirt soon replaced the flowing classic lines of the opening years of the century.

The fashions retained much of their charm until the 20's. The waist-line was at its highest about 1815 (Fig. 112), and after that date very gradually slid down to normal, over a period of some ten years. A military style—reflection of the Napoleonic Wars—was adopted and found favour for some five years. Braid, frogs, brass buttons, epaulets, high masculine neckwear and tall brimless hats slightly reminiscent of the French soldiers' hats, but rather

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more decorated (Fig. 113 A), were worn for several years between 1815-20.



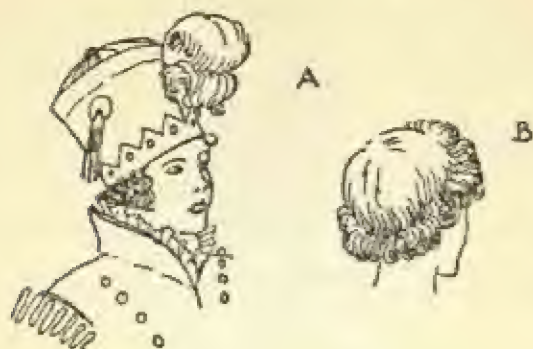
Fig. 112.—1815

Fig. 113 a and c show the manner in which the hair was often cut during the first fifteen years of



George III to George IV—1760-1820

the century, and later during its growing period was tied up on top with the curls hanging down ; this



1815



1820

Fig. 113

tendency towards a higher hairdressing was to be carried to absurd heights during the following decade.



Fig. 114.—1820

George III to George IV—1760-1820

Little handbags called reticules were adopted as a means of carrying the odds and ends so necessary to a lady's requirements, the pocket which had been previously concealed midst voluminous skirts having been abandoned with the too-clinging demands of fashion.

Amongst other noteworthy details of the 1810-20 decade, was a new phase in the use of starch on collars, cuffs and the new net over-skirts and frills. A tendency towards ruffles and ruching at neck and wrist, puffed and bunched sleeves (Fig. 114) and a distinct added interest at the hems of the dresses. Also plaids and deeper colourings for practically all the day dresses.

With men's clothes the speed of change was slowing down except in the one item, the introduction or rather establishment of trousers. These had, as has already been mentioned, been worn for some twenty years by small boys and sailors, but by 1805 they had definitely succeeded the knee-breeches in ordinary attire.

During the early years of the century they were made almost skin-tight (Fig. 115), and the Wellington boot was usually worn over them for walking as well as riding. For evening wear they reached only just below the calf. The fashionable ones were so tight that they were sometimes made of buckskin, and sitting down comfortably was an impossibility.

Ornamentation of the pockets was usual, and the waistcoat was so short that it barely reached the

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waist. The coat was being cut shorter in front each year from 1795 to 1808. The dimensions eventu-



Fig. 115.—1808

ally arrived at in 1808 are those almost identical with the modern tail-coat.

George III to George IV—1760-1820

The passion for revers started some time before 1790 was enlarged upon and exaggerated till it



Fig. 116.—1810

reached its maximum in 1810. The top-hat, ancestor of the one worn to-day, was established as the general

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rule for the nineteenth century, about 1805 or earlier. As the tricorne was typical of the eighteenth so the top-hat was for the nineteenth; it is rather a depressing thought that the homburg looks rather as if it may be for the twentieth.

Shirts had abandoned their frilled cuffs, but a double row of frills was worn down the front, protruding through the V at the top of the abbreviated waistcoat. The neckcloths or cravats were worn even wider than they had been and usually finished in a great knot in front, the sides of the collar underneath standing up to the lobe of the ear.

By 1810 the very short waistcoat had been supplanted in favour of one several inches longer, and the exceedingly tight trousers had taken on a looser, less-fitting appearance, except in the case of evening-dress when they retained their tight-like qualities for several years.

CHAPTER VIII

George IV, William IV and Victoria—1820-50

FROM 1820 to the present day ladies' fashions, with the help of tailors and dressmakers with an eye for business, change their shapes and sizes at such a bewildering speed that it is almost hopeless to deal with more than one decade at a time.

The 1820's, then, show us obvious changes—the widened shoulder, leg-of-mutton sleeves, fuller skirts and big hats. During the first five years of this decade the skirts were long, sweeping the ground in some instances, but curiously in contrast to other periods, the evening dress remained shorter, well above the ankle. This fashion was of course more practical and facilitated dancing, but it is a curious exception to the general rule that seems to have governed every other mode in evening wear. By 1825 the order of things was reversed and the evening dress touched the ground evenly all round, whilst the day dress rose to above the ankle, showing the new boots, never before worn by ladies. The hem of the dress always received the maximum of attention; bands of heavy fur, ruching, or stuffed

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rolls of material, any trimming in fact that would be sufficiently stiff to hold the skirts out and form



Fig. 117.—1825

a minimum of folds from waist to hem (Fig. 117). After 1828, and as the skirts grew shorter, the crease-

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less appearance was not so fashionable ; often they were gathered into a band at the waist and with



Fig. 118.—1827

this fashion the waist became increasingly small until an hour-glass figure was attained. Very high

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collars or ruffles were worn in the daytime in contrast to the very low off the shoulder-line adopted for evening wear. Hats and bonnets steadily increased in size during this decade. Some of them were quite charming until as late as 1826, but after that date they became positively grotesque in shape and absurd in their lavish over-ornamentation (Figs. 118 and 119 A). Ribbons and feathers were stuck about with a complete disregard for design. Great mountains of lace and positive flower gardens covered the crowns and if the brims were made of straw, bits and pieces of the ornamentation above were pulled through here and there to relieve the monotony of such a monstrous brim.

Sleeves grew larger and larger and were at length extended on wires at the shoulders or helped out with little bolsters. Shawls and cloaks of ornate design were more modish than coats.

Hairdressing changed considerably during this period from about 1820-5, the Clytie knot and the other style already described were still very fashionable for evening wear, usually with the addition of large bunches of flowers. Another style equally fashionable for day or evening wear was to have the hair parted in the middle with curls hanging down each side, the back hair piled high on top of the head. After 1825, as every other item of clothing became exaggerated so did the hairdressing, and women ventured further and further into the fields of absurd fantasy, and by 1828 we may see

George IV, William IV and Victoria—1820-50

headdresses almost as high as those of the 1770's. The usual style adopted was that of a wired-up knot



Fig. 119.—1830

or bow of hair, finished with a few ringlets and a profusion of flowers; the front hair was nearly always cut short and curled, forming a heavy, curly

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fringe over the forehead and ears. Bows of ribbon, stiffened with silver or gold threads, appeared intermingled with the rosebuds and loops of hair (Fig. 121). When this elaborate method of hairdressing was not favoured, gigantic turbans, also often made of silver-striped gauze and decorated with long flowing ribbons, were the latest thing in evening wear (Fig. 119 B).

The same tendency towards increasing squareness was almost as pronounced in men's clothing as it was with the women's. The sleeves of the coat were made very full at the top and gathered on to the shoulder, often with the addition of padding. The trousers were full and padded at the hips, tapering off to a tightness at the ankle achieved by the new method of fastening the bottom with straps under the shoes. These new trousers were called 'Peg-top' trousers and were exceedingly fashionable during the 20's. The added width of shoulder and hips gave the waist an unnatural appearance of slimness, which in some cases was accentuated by the wearing of stays. As the hips grew in size so the tails of the coat had to be cut out to accommodate them, and in the case of dress clothes these were cut separately and sewn on to achieve a more figure-fitting silhouette. Hats were also much larger and varied considerably during this decade. Although the top-hat was the standard motive for practically every shape, it was amazing what a difference could be obtained by the slight addition of a few inches here

George IV, William IV and Victoria—1820-50

and there. Sometimes they were as much as a foot in height, sometimes the crown was of normal



Fig. 120.—1825

dimensions and the brim enlarged and curled upwards at the sides (Fig. 120). It was about 1820 that

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the cravat was succeeded by a fashion for a sort of stiff collar made of coloured silk and worn over the



Fig. 121.—1832

high white collar. This could be worn with a bow tie or without and seems to have been essentially

George IV, William IV and Victoria—1820-50

a fashion for this decade, as a few years later the cravat and bow was once more the usual neckwear.

'The hair is parted on the forehead, and disposed partly in a plaited braid, which forms a diadem round the summit of the head, and partly in a full knot placed quite behind. A cluster of ringlets issue from the knot, which is transpierced by a pearl arrow. The braid is also entwined with pearls, a single row of which is brought low upon the forehead,' read the contemporary fashion-plate from which Fig. 121 is taken. So much for the simplicity of the 1830's. It is hardly credible, in these days of frantic haste, to contemplate any young woman seriously sitting down at her mirror and arranging her hair in this ridiculous fashion; even if, by some lucky chance, she had sufficient hair to acquire a coiffure of these dimensions, it must have taken hours to arrange—and only a few seconds to destroy.

These extreme fashions happily only lasted until 1834, and were then replaced by a simple style which lasted with minor modifications for some twenty years or more. This was parted in the middle and arranged smoothly across the brow, and either done up at the back or held in a chignon or net behind the ears. Sometimes curls were worn at the sides; this fashion formed a suitable lining for the poke-bonnet, now in its most well-remembered styles (Fig. 122). The wide shoulders did not entirely disappear until about 1837. From 1830 to that date they assumed gigantic proportions, wire and whale-



Fig. 122--1835

George IV, William IV and Victoria—1820-50

bone assisting. With the abandonment of the wide shoulders the sleeves received more attention, great puffs from wrist to elbow, bell-shaped and frilled, but always the fullness at the bottom. And with this style the skirts dropped once more and became increasingly full, helped out with pads, stiffened petticoats, and in 1839 a hoop. The silhouette from being X-shaped changed to that of an inverted V or bell; this shape was further emphasized by the increasing use of shawls and scarves and marabout furs. The neck-line, from being high 1830-5, was cut in a low boat-shape, a fashion which survived in Queen Victoria's Court until her death.

Several small details were noticeable in the general tendency towards a more 'sugary' effeminacy—so typical of Queen Victoria's reign. The craze for rose-buds particularly; these were worn practically everywhere, for every occasion. Round the face inside the bonnet, tucked in the waistband, fichu, or *décolleté* boat-neck; scattered with studied nonchalance all over the skirts of evening dresses, grouped in little posies to be held in the hand at balls, scattered in the hair, adorning little bits of lace and wire that served the purpose of bonnets (Fig. 122 c); embroidered on dresses, shawls, scarves, &c. In fact one may without exaggeration say that the rosebud was the motif for Victorian innocence. The use of other flowers was considered rather exotic and 'racy', and was therefore reserved for the matrons and elderly women.

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Men's clothes during the 30's altered little from those worn during the late 20's, except that the



Fig. 123.—1832

wide padded shoulders and hips diminished at about the same date as the women's wide shoulders.



Fig. 124-1845

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Longer hair was fashionable, this nearly always covering the ears, and a sort of fringe or beard was worn round the edge of the chin. The cravat was now sometimes tied in a large knot, the ends tucked down and into the waistcoat instead of being left in a bow at the throat; any coloured cravat might be worn, including plaids and checks. The shirt was often pleated across the chest, somewhat similar to the pleated dress shirts worn to-day. The ruffled shirts were not nearly so popular as they had been previously. There was a growing tendency towards black in men's clothes, but colours were still worn a great deal and a fashion for check or plaid trousers began about 1838 to last until about 1880. The use of braid and froggings had not entirely disappeared, as will be noticed in Fig. 123. Greatcoats were still very elaborate, having fur collars and coloured linings, and the hats still remained exaggerated. The chimney-pot hat, however, was not seen later than 1840.

The wraps and scarves and shawls of the 30's were succeeded in fashion by several small garments, with a little more definite shaping, although both shawls and scarves remained in favour for several years.

These newer styles were called various names such as the casaweek, mantelet, visites, &c. The 'visite' was a three-quarter-length coat for afternoon wear, usually trimmed with lace (Fig. 124). The mantelet was a mantle made long at the back with the sides cut up and long pieces hanging down over the front



Fig. 125.—1845

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of the dress (Fig. 125). For summer wear these mantelets were often made of lace. The depth at the back varied considerably, sometimes being only the width of the pieces worn over the shoulders in front. The casaweck was a short coat, usually made of padded silk or satin. These styles owed their popularity to the introduction of the crinoline; the skirts were so full and heavy that a long coat was merely unnecessary weight, the ladies' legs being already too well covered in a bewildering mass of petticoats and pantaloons. But the close-fitting bodice was not sufficient warmth for the upper part of the lady, so that a short coat or scarf or mantle became doubly necessary. Furs were not worn at this time, though velvet trimmed with fur was exceedingly popular for mantelets and short coats. Capes and cloaks of brief dimensions were more popular towards the end of the decade. The bonnet shrank considerably during the 40's and by 1850 slightly altered in shape, the inverted U giving place to a flattened O. These were still decorated with ribbons and flowers; but the side view had altered, the brim and crown now forming a straight line.

With the ever-increasing size of the crinoline skirt, some method of breaking up so large a surface had to be devised, so that day dresses were often split up the front, showing a panel of different material. Striped, checked or plaid materials were used and the stripes arranged in the opposite directions on the front panel (Fig. 126), and little bows or



Fig. 126.—1847

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tiny ornaments placed down the front. With evening gowns the trouble was easier to mitigate. Layers of frills or strips of lace insertion could be used. Or sometimes the whole skirt from waist to hem might be composed of frills some six inches in depth. Elaborate patterns in braid were often employed on heavier materials.

Large straw hats became fashionable during the summer of 1846. These had the small crown and large brim of the eighteenth-century hats, and were tied with ribbons drawn through the brim from the crown. They were not trimmed except with the ribbons, and were in striking contrast to the flowered and laced bonnets worn at the same time.

Practically the only changes in men's attire during the 40's was the increasing looseness of the trousers towards the 50's and a variation in the neckwear. Otherwise the coat and waistcoat remained almost unchanged. About 1840 the very high collar that had been so fashionable was replaced by one of less restricting dimensions. The cravat gradually disappeared, and a narrow tie took its place. The more elegant young man even went so far as to turn his shirt collar down over the tie, thus giving his neck much greater freedom. Flowered waistcoats were still worn, but a passion for black had almost eliminated the coloured coat. The lapels of the coat were very wide and turned back to below the waist to show as much of the waistcoat as possible. About 1849-50 the newest styles adopted a lapel

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of less width, and when the coat was worn closed the buttoning was decidedly higher. The more



Fig. 127.—1848

ornate styles in headgear were not worn by the really fashionable after 1845, the general and established wear being the top-hat.



Fig. 128.—1854

CHAPTER IX

Victoria—1850-80

PERHAPS the most typical feature of the 50's was the passion for heavy materials and dark colours for day wear, in violent contrast to the pastel shades and white for evening.

So general was the craze for white, indeed, that it was considered almost indecent for a young girl to wear anything else. Pink, perhaps, or if she was out of her teens blue, but yellow and green—no. These shades were reserved for those of more mature years.

For street and morning wear dull purples, magentas, plum and violent shades of blue and emerald green were the most fashionable. And the general fashion for stripes and bands of contrasting materials on all garments (Fig. 128) must have made the streets appear amazingly cheerful, even if a trifle crude to modern standards.

Velvet and plush figured very much to the fore during this decade, and the added weight of these materials must have been almost intolerable but for the timely support of the newest thing in crinolines. The giant cage of whalebone and cord of the 1850's



Fig. 129.—1857

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was of even more complicated design than the farthingales of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and the panniers of the eighteenth, although it had far more suppleness in that the hoops of whalebone could be easily squashed in any direction. The crinoline was entirely separate from the skirts and petticoats, and was discreetly hidden from any chance view by the voluminous frills of four or more petticoats in close proximity.

A peculiar 'novelty' in the way of a veil appeared in the early 50's (Fig. 128). This was a veil with a little runner cord round the brim so that should the wearer wish a string could be pulled and the 'curtains' drawn, concealing the face—a fashion which increased the absurd persistence in making the female figure into an inverted V shape, the waist having been concealed by the addition of a cape, the head and neck was also concealed by the veiled bonnet.

The width of the sleeves increased as the decade advanced, and by 1857 huge cuffs rivalling those worn by the men in the early eighteenth century (Fig. 129), took the place of the more modest sleeve of the late 40's and early 50's. False sleeves of broderie-anglais, Valenciennes lace or hand-embroideries, were usually worn under the huge turned-back cuffs. Ornament was at its boldest, and braid-work and large velvet flowers adorned every garment that was not already frilled and flounced. Evening dresses were extraordinarily overburdened with fes-



Fig 130.—1860

toons of flowers and gathered and bunched-up layers of tulle or tarlatan, as much as 20 yards of material being required for quite a simple evening gown.

Several small details appeared to alter the masculine attire, the most obvious being the turned-down collar, high buttoned coat, almost concealing the waistcoat that had for so many years been such an essential feature of men's dress, and the re-introduction of cuffs to the coats. This latter item was an essential feature of the late 50's. Although small turned-back cuffs were sometimes worn as early as 1853, by 1855 they were essential to the well-dressed man, but had entirely disappeared soon after 1860. Less formal modes were slowly creeping into the wardrobe of those who cared for 'sports' and country life. A straw hat, previously unheard of for men, made its appearance for the seaside and river. This fitted the head in the crown and had a large somewhat soft brim, usually turned up behind. It was about this time that top-hats were abandoned for cricket, and a narrow tie similar to those worn to-day took the place of the wide ties and cravats of earlier days. The 'full-skirted' and 'tailed' coats were still, however, the only adopted styles; the cut-away coat was a revelation of the 60's.

The year 1860 saw the crinoline in its most exaggerated proportions as a circular skirt—if such an absurdity can be called a skirt. About 1861, a tendency to elongate the back almost to the extent of a train altered the shape considerably, and from

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being a half-circle, in the side elevation, it became a slowly lengthening isosceles triangle (Fig. 131). By 1866 various experiments were being tried out, including a high-waisted gown with a straight skirt, full at the bottom like an inverted V; the gradual lengthening of the skirt at the back, however, eventually suggested the new idea. This was to turn the skirt up and fasten it at the waist, in much the same way as the bustles of the seventeenth century, showing the skirt beneath, which now assured the importance of the main skirt. By 1868 the crinoline had been consigned to the rubbish heap and the bustle had usurped its 'throne'. The real circular crinoline, in its last days of popularity, rose well above the ankles of its wearer, displaying to the interested spectator little boots made of coloured silk or cloth with patent toe-caps and striped stockings. When the skirts were not short, an 'improved' crinoline was worn; this arranged with a complicated series of cords, so that it could be raised or lowered at will. When this stage was reached, it was only too obvious that it could not remain in fashion and increase in size for long, as it had become the source of a hundred jokes and satirical drawings.

In the matter of headdress several new ideas were prevalent during the early 60's, chief of which being the 'pork-pie' hat (Fig. 131 A). This was very fashionable for two or three years, and was usually worn in conjunction with the chignon. Later, about



Fig. 131.—1865

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1864, little hats with brims and decorated with feathers replaced them, and the chignon disappeared in favour of long curls again. Bonnets of lace and ribbon were nearly always worn indoors, and the outdoor bonnet diminished in size until it was merely an excuse for a tiny brim and lots of ribbons, flowers and feathers tied under the chin (Fig. 131 B and C). The deep rich colourings of the 50's were succeeded for a few years by darker, more sombre tones, but about 1867 contrasts of a very vivid sort asserted themselves again; purple and yellow, and magenta and royal blue being two very favourite combinations.

Both long magyar coats and short-waisted coats were very popular, and a new style in capes was seen in 1865. This was cut with a tight-fitting yoke over the shoulders, and the fullness gathered in equally all round instead of being shaped on the cross as had previously been the case. Fringes and feathers became popular as an adornment for evening dress and pleated or gathered frills of varying widths almost always appeared on the skirts as long as the crinoline was worn. The earlier edition of the 'bustle' seemed to rely on colour contrasts for its decoration more than feathers, flowers and frills, but this was only typical of the years '68 and '69. By 1870 a renewed fervour for wild decoration set in, hardly diminishing throughout the century.

For men the most noticeable innovation of the 60's was the new sack-coat. This was the forerunner of



Fig. 132 A. 1855



Fig. 132 B.—1869

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the modern lounge-suit coat, though in their first stages they were considerably longer than they are to-day. They were made with three buttons, of which only the top one did up (Fig. 132 B) and were often made of velvet, the edges bound with braid. The typical 'dandy' of the 60's wore 'Dundreary whiskers', loud check trousers and a monocle. The fancy waistcoat disappeared with the abandonment of the long-skirted coat, and was succeeded by one made of the same material as the coat. Another style in coats was the cut-away coat, similar in style to the modern morning coats, curving inwards from a place some three inches below the bottom button.

Hats and caps showed new variety. A flat cap with a little turned-up brim and made of tweed was quite popular during the late 60's and the shortened top-hat (Fig. 132 B) was exceedingly smart. On the whole men's dress became nonchalant again in contrast to the extravagantly elegant styles of a few years earlier. Cut and style in men's clothes, as we know them to-day, were conspicuous by their absence, and the loose uncreased trousers, and coats that touched the wearer only on the shoulders had almost the informality of pyjamas, and indeed in some contemporary illustrations certainly look as if they'd been slept in. The tie, as we know it to-day, had definitely established itself as the only form of neckwear over the collar. The collar still varied considerably in size and shape, sometimes stiff and upstanding, or soft and turned down at the front



Fig. 133.—1874

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edges only. The back was still rarely seen turned down over the tie. Ties could be knotted and held in place with a pearl pin or solitaire, or tied in a bow. The former style seemed the most popular. Buttonholes were much affected and cigarette-smoking became a habit.

With the establishment of the bustle the waist-line descended. At least the shaping of the waist altered not at all, but the actual line where the bodice ended was several inches below the accentuated waist in front, whilst the skirt at the back stood out horizontally from the waist sometimes as much as sixteen inches (Fig. 133).

Such a multitude of odd frills, ribbons and flounces adorned these skirts that it is exceedingly difficult to give any comprehensive description. Sometimes the back of the bodice came down, forming a sharp curve at the back and spreading out over the bustle fan-wise. The skirts could be either split up the back or front, or gathered at each side, and the front part dragged up in a series of U-shaped folds and the back part bunched up over the bustle. When the skirt was split at the back a train or cascade of frills usually covered the back of the under-skirt. The split edges of the over-skirt could be ornamented in any manner, but usually a gathered or ruched frill was sewn on to the border, the sides being drawn up to make as much of the frilling as possible (Fig. 136 a).

In 1875 the bustle started to diminish. The angle

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from the back of the waist was succeeded by a figure-fitting shaping over the hips. During the



Fig. 134.—1877

years 1877 and 1878 the flatness tended to be so exaggerated that in some cases the fullness of the

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skirts did not begin till the knees. 1878 and 1879 witnessed another experimental stage, with what was



Fig. 135.—1878

then called the fish-tail skirt, tight-fitting to a few inches above the ankle. With these dresses an ankle-

chain was worn to stop the wearer from taking too large a step and thus splitting her very restricting garments. These dresses were worn several inches off the ground and are in direct contrast to the bustles which preceded and succeeded them, so short a period indeed that many records miss it altogether, merely noting the temporary rise and fall of the bustle towards the 80's. It is a particularly interesting style in its extreme brevity of popularity and in the peculiar fact that those really fashionable ladies who adopted it in its most restricting forms wore a single garment underneath composed of chamois leather figure-fitting to the ankles, and allowing the knees only an inch or two's play. Stripes and plaids were the most fashionable materials for these dresses, and little jackets with a stiffened basque were worn with them (Fig. 135). The only tendency towards the bustle was a flat bow at the back and often even this distinction was not evident.

During the early 60's the hair was generally worn in long curls down the back, whilst the front was drawn off the face and ears, showing to full advantage the large gaudy ear-rings so dear to the hearts of our grandmothers.

Later it was piled higher at the back in a sort of 'bun' with the curls hanging from the protuberance. Another style fashionable in the middle of the decade was that of tying the hair in a huge loose knot (Fig. 136 B). All sorts of variations arrived

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about 1877, a complicated combination of chignons, curls and plaits being very popular (Fig. 134). The closing years of the decade saw the hair done up rather high at the back of the head and curls were reserved for evening wear only.

Little hats and bonnets were typical from 1870 to 1880, and in a variety so large that several pages of drawings would be inadequate description. During the first five years the hats were definitely perched on the front of the head, and never had a brim more than an inch or two in width. Crowns were negligible for the most part, but some of them tended to height. They were all decorated lavishly with flowers, feathers, lace or ribbons, and an absurdity called a bonnet was worn (Fig. 136 A). This resembled more than anything the lace glass mat of a more elegant 'luncheon set', and was tied beneath the chin with a wide ribbon. Occasionally a tiny feather or a bow of ribbon of microscopic dimensions adorned the 'bonnet'. Contemporary ridicule termed it 'a postage stamp and a pair of boot-laces'. This bonnet was rarely seen, except worn by old ladies, later than 1877. After 1875 the angle inclined more to the back of the head and the crowns became higher, but still with a minimum of brim.

Men's styles changed hardly at all, except for the complete abandonment of the old fashions in preference for the sack-coat, and still further adventures in the way of hats. These included the deer-



Fig. 136.—1873

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stalker's hat with the little bow on top, a sort of sporting cap made rather similar only without the 'ear-flap', and a round-crowned hard hat, ancestor to the bowler of later years. Striped and checked trousers were still the latest thing, and great-coats of loud check patterns were very fashionable. The Dundreary whiskers remained in favour throughout the decade, sometimes being worn without a moustache, and in some cases with the addition of a tiny pointed beard on the chin. The hair was still worn rather long and brushed forward over the ears at the sides.



Fig. 137.—1882

CHAPTER X

Victoria—1880-1900

THE first three years of this decade re-adopted the same tendency to elongate the waist that had been the vogue before the advent of the short-lived 'fish-tail'. The dresses worn 1880-3 were almost exact replicas of those worn 1875-7, the only substantial difference being that the earlier gowns had trains whilst these barely touched the ground—except in the case of evening gowns. There was a marked attempt at simplicity in the top part of the dress—high collars, tight sleeves, and a general 'fit' that adhered in every essential to the corset (Fig. 137). The draped skirt was now called a 'fish-wife' and was often terminated with a fringe, or made of contrasting material to the rest of the gown. The mixture of two plaids of entirely different colours was very popular. The year 1881 saw the bustle once more established; indeed, fashions seemed to be advancing backwards. During this decade the fashions of 1885 resembled their prototypes of 1875 in almost every detail except length, for the latter were considerably shorter.

The fastenings of the bodice were now always in

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front, whereas a decade earlier they had been at the back, and the collar was worn practically always up to the throat.

Hats were larger and for a year or two favoured a brim, and, of course, the hairdressing had changed. The hairdressing of the 80's was somewhat dull and uninspired, merely being lumped up on top of the head to begin with, and later scraped tightly up at the back with all the hair piled well over the forehead (Fig. 138 A). This high hairdressing was often helped out with the aid of pads, and the hats had necessarily to become much taller in the crown to accommodate the hair (Fig. 138 B). One rather startlingly new fashion appeared for evening wear—this was the sleeveless gown. It was considered extremely advanced and rather naughty, although in reality it only exposed the shoulder and about four or five inches of arm between the draped fichu and the long gloves, which were an essential part of the evening wear. Little shoulder capes, fur-trimmed, were worn to cope with this newly exposed part, and prevent chills from draughts. Trains were still worn on evening gowns, but they could be lifted and worn over the arm should their wearer require to join in the exceedingly exhausting occupation of dancing. There were, also, at the same time dresses that followed the day fashions in length and were about two or three inches from the ground—for those who took dancing more seriously.

New interests in sports, such as tennis and



Fig. 138.—1888

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bicycling, tended to make the men's clothes even more informal than previously, and during the 80's we even see the knitted 'pull-over', and knee-breeches frequently adopted in preference to trousers. The trousers had been the only shape of nether-garment worn by men for eighty years. But now (after about 1889) for all sporting events the Norfolk jacket and knee-breeches take the board (Fig. 139 A). The Norfolk jacket was in every way an entirely new idea, no belted coats having been worn since the time of William and Mary. And the increasing use of tweeds for men's clothes became an established medium about the same date, when previously it had been looked upon in rather the light of an eccentricity than a rule. Both the straw 'boater' and the bowler-hat owe their origin to the experiments of the 80's, and from that date these two singularly unattractive styles have been constantly in fashion (Fig. 139 B and C).

Men's full evening dress was also established in the early 80's and has done little in the way of advancement since that date, though possibly a little more attention to fit is more evident now than it was fifty years ago !

The top-hat, dark coat and striped trousers still remained the regular town wear and the coat was cut with a slight waist in contrast to the earlier sack-coats ; cuffs or imitation cuffs were still worn quite frequently on the coats.

During the year 1891 the bustle once more went

A



B



C



Fig. 139.—1890

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out of fashion, to be succeeded by a rather loose-fitting skirt, fuller at the hem and moulded tightly over the hips. From about 1891 to 1893 the skirts trailed the ground, and were supplied with a little fringe of velvet or plush to catch the dust! With the departure of the bustle, the new interest was centred on the sleeves, and these grew in size and width until 1895, when for a short time they almost exceeded the gigantic sleeves of the 1830's. The general contour, indeed, differed very little from that of 1830, except that the skirts were considerably longer and the hats smaller, though even some of these tended to ridiculous exaggeration in their manner of ornamentation (Fig. 141 B and C). Even the high neck with an Elizabethan ruffle was worn. And the tightly laced waist diminished in size to alarmingly small dimensions: a fourteen- or sixteen-inch waist was fashionable and an eighteen-inch was positively large. The shape of the skirt now flared out evenly all round, 1893 (Fig. 140), and the fashionable outline was sustained by a band, some nine inches wide, of tailor's canvas attached to the inside of the hem. The little fringes were still worn at the edge of the skirt to catch the dust and prevent it penetrating on to the bottom of the dress itself. Heavy materials and rather dull colours were very fashionable—a combination of black and white, and navy blue and nigger brown being considered very smart. It was about this time that brown shoes and stockings replaced the black ones that had been worn



Fig. 140.—1893

for several years. These were only worn in conjunction with a navy-blue suit or dress !

It is rather an interesting fact that in making the bodices of these gowns, the sleeves, being of primary importance, were cut out first, three or four yards of material being required for them alone. The bodice itself was made out of the pieces that were left. These pieces were all quite small and fitted together with the assistance of a tight lining and bones at every seam to produce an entirely creaseless surface. The sleeves were stiffened by a complicated bunching up of tailor's canvas, or in more exaggerated styles by the addition of wires. Usually the part of the sleeve covering the forearm was tight-fitting—these were called 'Leg-of-Mutton' sleeves. But 'Bishop' sleeves were very popular, these being full from shoulder to wrist, and another addition of tailor's canvas was worn at the wrist.

Coats to cover the more exaggerated styles were inconvenient in their excessive weight. Sometimes a short coat was worn with huge sleeves and a little sharply curved-out basque, but generally the cape or cloak were the accepted form of outdoor wear. These were made in various styles, cut on the cross, or gathered into a shoulder-yoke, the smartest being those worn very short and full that only reached to the elbow (Fig. 141 A). Velvet and cloth judiciously mixed were worn in the winter and lighter ones of lace and crape for the summer. The high collar was always worn.

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The high collar was an essential feature of the late 90's, and very few ladies cared to break away from the accepted style for day wear ; the ' medici ' collar and the straight band were equally popular, whilst the new ' blouses ' usually affected a masculine turn-down collar. These blouses were a very new



Fig. 141.—1893

feature of the later 90's and followed the masculine shirt in style, with the exception of the ridiculously full sleeves. They were worn a great deal by ladies who indulged in the daring pursuit of bicycling and other sports, and usually worn with a neat navy-blue suit.

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The high-collar craze was even carried to the extent of being worn with evening dresses, though in this case a wide ribbon, ruffle or band of ruching tied with ribbon was worn round the throat, leaving the chest and shoulders quite often bare. Little boned lace collars, attached to a sort of 'dickey' of lace or net, were worn underneath a bodice that was not cut sufficiently high for the fashionable requirements.

There was no standard rule during the 90's that governed the size of hats. These might be ludicrously small (Figs. 140 and 141 A) or exaggeratedly ornamented. As long as they were 'perched' and not worn on the head they were equally fashionable. The hair was dressed a little more informally than it had been during the late 80's. The general tendency was to pile it loosely on top, allowing it to 'puff' slightly all round, especially in front over the forehead.

From 1895 the skirts tended to be fuller at the back again, often sweeping the ground, and the corset was designed to give the figure a different angle. The corset of the 1890-5 era was merely curved sharply inwards, so that the thorax was crushed with a general pressure, the hips and bust bulging above and below. The newer ones produced a flatness in front from the waist downward, and the back sharply curved, so that the hips were thrown backwards and the bust forward. Possibly the easiest way to explain the fashionable figure of

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the late 90's is to draw a vertical line with an S over it, slightly tilted backwards ; the waist occurs where the S crosses the line (Fig. 142). The waist was still absurdly small, and although the sleeves diminished considerably towards the close of the century, the wasp effect was still maintained, as the upper part of the body was no longer restrained, and tended to bulge over the lowered corset. For those who were less ample-bosomed, 'forms' of buckram were worn, and rows of frilling were sewn on to the undergarments to give the desired voluptuous lines.

Dresses made entirely of 'broderie-anglais' were extremely fashionable in the last years of the century (Fig. 142), and hats tended to width rather than to height, large 'alsatian' bows being one of the chief items of adornment.

Various extraordinary 'suits' of masculine cut and with 'knickerbockers' were worn by women for bicycling, and the leg exposed as far as the knee was a hitherto unheard-of audacity.

During the 90's men's clothes tended if anything to become even more informal than previously ; the 'knickerbockers' had been definitely established for country wear, and these were often worn with gaiters (Fig. 141 D) or spats and 'cycling' stockings. A new type of coat, sharply curved away from the waist and without tails (Fig. 141 D) was equally popular worn with either trousers or knickerbockers.

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Fig. 141 E shows the still uncreased trouser worn crumpled well over the instep and almost covering



Fig. 142.—1900

the heel at the back. The cloth used in the 90's was not usually as thick as the suitings used to-day, so

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that the material followed the line of the leg, producing folds at calf, thigh and knee.

Incongruous though these fashions seem to our modern eyes, they were amazingly appropriate for the types that wore them, so typical of the elegant and slightly pompous placidity in which the late Victorians basked.

And so it is with other fashions. Each and every era has an evasive but nevertheless unavoidable connexion between its modes and manners.



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